

MCV

The Market for Home Computing & Video Games

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Issue 120



Kamar Shah outlines Orange's wireless gaming strategy



Infogrames' UK boss Stuart Furnival aims for the top three



Shan Savage reveals Disney's increased ambitions for 2001


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Sega changes Pace

Further evidence of hardware shift emerges as new deal is signed with the set-top box firm headed by former Sega Europe boss

by Lisa Foster

DESPITE Sega's fierce denial that it is to stop manufacturing the Dreamcast console, a major shift in the games giant's hardware proposition still looks likely - with a new deal with a UK set-top box company about to be signed.

Following a report by reputable Japanese newspaper Nihon Keizai Shimbun, MCV's online news service posted a story on Tuesday night (23/1/2001) claiming that Sega would stop manufacturing the console from March. It was also suggested that Sega would begin developing for rival games formats.

Sega swiftly responded, in a carefully-worded statement: "Sega of America stated today that the company globally reaffirms its commitment to Dreamcast."



However, VP of communications Charles Bellfield admitted to MCV that Sega "may change the manufacturer of the Dreamcast hardware" and that "the Dreamcast platform technology will evolve going forward". He also revealed that a new hardware licensing deal with a UK firm is being finalised.

MCV understands that this British company is Pace Micro Technology, the Yorkshire-based manufacturer of set-top boxes, which is headed up by former Sega Europe boss Malcolm Miller.

It is expected that Pace will create a new Dreamcast hardware proposition. Given Sega's ambitions in the online sector and Pace's skills in 'home gateway' technology, high-end Internet access and even interactive TV features may be incorporated.

Despite Sega's denials, a move to concentrate on its strengths in software development would seem a wise one - particularly given that Dreamcast has struggled to claim a significant market share in Japan, the US or Europe.



MILLER: Working with Sega once again

Indeed, Sega's share price rose around 15 per cent to Y1,470 (£8.50) following this week's reports. And a senior Euro industry insider offered: "Were Sega to choose this route, it would be the bravest move ever made in the industry and one that makes perfect sense. The quality of Sega's content has never been in dispute; they should concentrate on their strengths."

Infogrames closes Hasbro acquisition

INFOGRAPHES will finally complete its \$100m purchase of Hasbro Interactive today (26/1/01) but the fate of the firm's 150 UK games staff remains unclear.

The acquisition gives the French games giant a portfolio of some 200 games and includes a 20-year option to exploit the software opportunities of all Hasbro's toy properties.

However, the fate of the 50 Hasbro Interactive staff at Stockley Park, 50 in Chipping Sodbury and another 44 at Europress in Macclesfield has yet to be announced. But it is thought that Infogrames will be looking to consolidate the newly-acquired business as soon as possible.

INFOGRAPHES

Pressure mounts for dotcoms

Lack of confidence in Internet outfits continues, with games companies now feeling the strain

by Ronnie Dungan

THE closure of online gaming operation BarrysWorld has further highlighted the current crisis of confidence in technology stocks.

BarrysWorld became the latest victim of dotcom gloom this week announcing that it will cease trading due to a lack of funding. It will officially close on February 5th.

Over the last few months the company had grown to such an extent that it claimed to be Europe's largest online gaming hub, attracting more than 300,000 players every month and generating 160m page impressions.



ALEXANDER: "It's hard for anyone to get more funding"

Other dotcoms in the games sector are thought to be feeling the pressure at the moment. Ubi Soft's mobile gaming subsidiary LudiWap has rationalised its UK operation, bringing its IT

infrastructure back to France, whilst Gameplay has rebuffed rumours that it is to announce a further round of redundancies.

BarrysWorld chairman Nick Alexander says those companies reliant on outside funding will continue to live on the edge: "It's the attitude towards these types of businesses which has changed and whereas once it was easy to get investment, now it's swung too far the other way. It will continue to be hard for anyone who has to go back for further funding. It will be a couple of years before we can expect to see a breakeven business."

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FORMAT: PlayStation 2

AVAILABLE: Feb 2001
SRP: £ 29.99

BARCODE: 7194801180979
GENRE: USB Radio for PS2

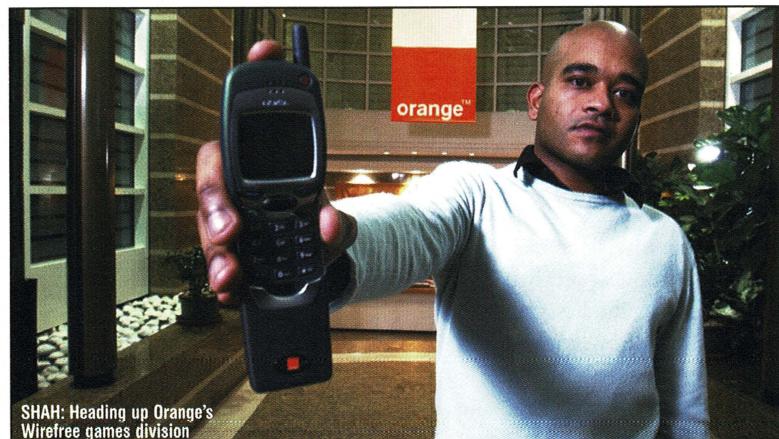
Future bright for Orange gamers

UK mobile operator finally unveils its games strategy • 14 WAP titles now available to users

by Samantha Loveday

UK mobile network Orange has finally unveiled plans for its Wirefree gaming division, which it says will form the cornerstone of its new entertainment strategy.

Orange claims that it will be the first UK network to develop and publish games over the mobile Internet. With 14 games already available to Orange's WAP users, the firm will expand as both a developer and publisher with access to a range of internal and external content. This range of games is set to increase as mobile technologies continue to evolve towards third generation formats.



SHAH: Heading up Orange's Wirefree games division

Kamar Shah, games marketing manager for Orange, stated: "We are in the position of being able to develop content, control delivery mechanism, and have access to a

range of emerging technologies."

As of January 12th Orange UK boasted over 10 million customers and aims to have a presence in 50 countries by 2005.

Eric speeds online

COMMUNICATIONS supplier Ericsson has inked a deal which it believes could realistically see higher quality and faster broadband access for online gamers worldwide.

Zhone Technologies boasts next generation network products that support voice, video, Internet and entertainment services. Ericsson will use this portfolio and provide Zhone's products through its global market channels to become the preferred prime contractor in large scale carrier projects. The companies claim that this will mean faster access for Internet users.

"When it comes to multi-service broadband access, Zhone and Ericsson share a common vision; we both see this area as one of the key factors for modern carriers today," said Mory Ejabat, CEO of Zhone.

ERICSSON

New handheld is UK bound

A NEW HANDHELD gaming and communications device is set to arrive in Europe later this year.

A further round of funding in US firm Cybiko has cleared the way for it to launch its wireless device this side of the Atlantic.

Additional investment of \$16m from Vesta Capital Partners means that Cybiko can now target Japan and Europe with its Wireless Communicator, which has already sold some 500,000 units in the US. It boasts a range of over 170 games which can be downloaded for free from the firm's website.

In addition, AOL has invested substantial funds in the venture.



Titles are created by the firm's Moscow-based R&D centre and include Darts, Billiards, Pinball, Cybiko Superbike, Poker and many others.

The device retails at \$99 in the US and features email functions, games, spell checker, organiser, address book and MP3 player.

David Yang, CEO of Cybiko commented: "When we conceived the idea of Cybiko in 1999 we knew that we would be combining two market segments with fantastic potential. The financial endorsements of AOL, together with Vesta Group, will enable us to continue to create new features and products."



Darlings and San get rich pickings

CODEMASTERS' Darling brothers have scored another accolade this week - claiming a place in The Mail on Sunday Rich Report 2001.

Richard and David Darling were listed at number 56, with a fortune reportedly worth £465m. According to the report, mergers and acquisitions experts said that Codemasters could be worth between £500m and £600m.

Meanwhile, Argonaut's Jez San made number 153 in the list, with £191m. This is mainly due to Arc International, in which San holds an 18.4 per cent stake and is worth £162m.

Pre-Orders

Week ending January 26th

MCV provides a new weekly listing of the top games titles being pre-ordered via online retailer Software First....



PC



Grim Fandango

PlayStation



Final Fantasy IX

2. Simon The Sorcerer 3D
3. Curse of Monkey Isd.
4. GP3 Season '99
5. Quake 3 Team Arena

1. Digimon World
3. LMA Manager 2001
4. Martian Gothic Unif.
5. Inspector Gadget

PlayStation 2



Gran Turismo 3

Game Boy Colour



Scooby Creepy Capers

2. Moto GP
3. MGS 2
4. World Is Not Enough
5. Wipeout Fusion

2. Harvest Moon 2
3. WWF No Mercy
4. Lemmings
5. FIFA 2001

The charts are compiled based on firm customer pre-orders. Where back-catalogue titles are listed, this signifies a product is due to be re-released. For further information call Software First on 01268 531222.

Share Prices

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Price 19/1/2001

One week % change

US	\$	%
3Dfx	0.438	16.80%
3DO	2.781	7.21%
Acclaim	1.219	18.23%
Activision	18.313	2.09%
Brilliant Digital	1.438	-23.31%
Creative Technology	12.563	12.93%
eGames	0.313	11.39%
Eidos	4	0.00%
Electronic Arts	41.5	14.48%
Electronics Boutique	19.375	9.93%
Hasbro	12.438	-1.48%
HearMe.com	1.25	-4.80%
Infogrames	9.375	11.94%
Intel	33.563	4.48%
Intergraph	7.5	7.14%
Interplay	2.75	20.56%
Mattel	15.39	2.87%
Microsoft	61	14.02%
Midway	7.69	2.40%
Recoton	10.188	1.24%
Silicon Graphics	3.938	-7.34%
SonicBlue	8.063	0.00%
Take-Two	12.5	5.26%
THQ	27.438	5.53%
Toys R Us	23.313	-4.36%
Walt Disney	32.688	3.56%

UK	£	%
Argonaut Games	0.6	-0.83%
Electronics Boutique	0.655	-3.68%
Eidos	2.835	5.00%
Empire Interactive	0.685	-1.44%
Future Net	1.05	-9.87%
Gameplay.com	1.24	-1.98%
Online	1.425	2.52%
Pure Entertainment	0.27	-1.82%
Rage	0.12	6.19%
SCI	1.74	-41.51%

France	Euro	%
Bigben Interactive	30.4	-3.49%
Cryo	15.8	4.02%
Infogrames	21.4	8.63%
Kalisto	16.09	3.81%
Titus	15.49	34.70%
Ubi Soft	43.5	12.99%

www.durlacher.com



Sega shifts strategy

ONCE AGAIN a bizarre kind of dance ritual took place this week between journalists and Sega communications staff across the globe.

Rumours and subsequent reports from even the most highly regarded news sources were denied by the games giant, although the company refused to answer direct questions on its future strategy. Instead media relations staff announced that no statement had been made about Dreamcast hardware and underlined its policy not to comment on rumours. Subsequently, media speculation increased to a crescendo within hours.

Sega has flatly refused to MCV that it will cease manufacturing Dreamcast hardware in March, as had been suggested. However, its new deal with Pace is sure to see the arrival of a set-top box boasting Dreamcast gaming technology and more. I would suggest that's a major shift in any console company's hardware strategy.

And it's a change in the firm's direction that's likely to be respected by the rest of the industry - from developers and publishers to retailers. And yes, even rivals.

Sega's skills in producing top quality software are envied across the market. The company has also made good progress in its online Dreamarena business. But, at the same time, few would deny that Dreamcast has struggled to gain any significant ground in the global console arena.

Up against the fiercely dominant PlayStation, it was no contender. With PS2 here now, Xbox about to make its charge in Japan and the US later this year and with long-time opponent Nintendo still with GameCube up its sleeves, the viability of the console moving forward is in serious doubt.

At the same time, increasing financial pressure - that is, four consecutive years of losses - means that Sega has to look closely at its strategy for the home gaming business.

That future would appear to lie in licensing its technology to set-top box manufacturers. And it's a smart move.

Pace is a global leader in the sector, manufacturing machines for some of the most respected names in digital, cable and satellite TV, including Sky, Ondigital and NTL. Incorporating Dreamcast gaming and online functions with its existing technology could see Sega finally bring to market that much-discussed all-encompassing set-top box.

Meanwhile, Sega can concentrate its own efforts on developing and publishing top-notch games, be that for its own Dreamcast format or for others.

As has been pointed out on many occasions, indeed on these pages just last week, we all know where Sega is headed.

Now we just need Sega to admit it.

Lisa Foster

Lisa.Foster@mcvuk.com

Grames aiming for the top

Key first party titles and the introduction of Hasbro portfolio will push Infogrames into top three

by Samantha Loveday

INFOGRAMES' UK MD Stuart Furnival has outlined ambitious plans for the firm to be one of the top three publishers in the UK by the end of the year.

The company is confident it has one of its strongest product line-ups to date for the first half of 2001. This will be led by Final Fantasy IX (PSX) on February 16th and followed by Digimon (PSX) and Unreal Tournament 2 (PS2) in March, Desperado (PC), Sheep, Dog and Wolf (PSX) and Edge of Chaos (PC) in April and the eagerly



FURNIVAL: Ambitions for a top three position anticipated Alone in the Dark 4 (PSX/GBC/DC/PC) in May.

"We have a very strong range across the board even before we add in the Hasbro catalogue," Furnival told MCV. "We are definitely stronger on PC this year and it's not just the full-price portfolio either." Meanwhile, Infogrames is also remaining committed to the Game Boy.

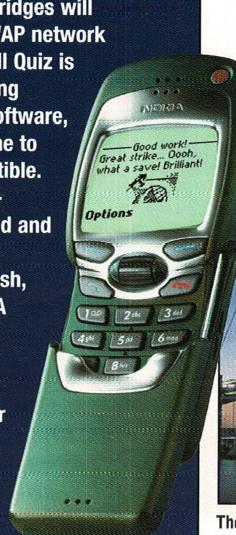
"We are planning to release titles steadily throughout the year," Furnival continued. "The short term aim is to be in the top three publishers by the end of the year. If we aren't featuring in the top five by at least June, then I am going to be disappointed."

WAP move for LMA

CODEMASTERS has confirmed its move into the wireless gaming arena, with its first WAP title nearing completion.

LMA Football Quiz is based on the brand success of LMA Manager and has been designed and developed internally by Codemasters. Digital Bridges will distribute the title to WAP network operators. LMA Football Quiz is being developed utilising Digital Bridges Unity software, which enables the game to be multi-phone compatible.

The title will be pan-European, with modified and localised versions in English, German, Spanish, French and Italian. LMA Football Quiz will be promoted in the advertising and marketing materials for LMA Manager 2001, which releases on March 9th on the original PlayStation.



ExCel Toys with UK event

THE UK Toy Fair is set to kick off tomorrow (January 27th) and, although there won't be any big name video games publishers in

attendance, peripherals will be on display courtesy of Radica UK.

The British Toy and Hobby Association is expecting to pull in around 15,000 visitors throughout the course of the show.

The event runs from January 27th - 31st at ExCel in London. The show regularly attracts around 450 exhibitors.

Radica UK will be showing off the full range of accessories under its Gamester brand, while also showcasing its Connectv and Girl Tech ranges. The company will be on stand number SD49.

For more information on the toy fair call 0207 701 7127.



The 2001 UK Toy Fair makes the move from Olympia over to the purpose-built ExCel facility

Mech gets fourth PC outing



WHILE XBOX is grabbing most of the industry headlines at the moment, Microsoft is keen to remind consumers that it is also a top PC games publisher and has a number of quality titles in its locker, kicking off with Mechwarrior 4 next month.

Launching on February 2nd, the title will be backed with a viral assault throughout the specialist, non-specialist and offline media, POS, in-store activity at launch and a dedicated website. Print ads will also be appearing, while TV and radio slots have been secured. Microsoft has also got full distribution in Woolworths for the first time.

"We are confident that this is going to be the biggest PC title launched in February," Richard Teversham, head of games marketing at Microsoft, told MCV. "We expect it to be a top 10 hit at the very least, but I'm actually confident of top five. Our PC line up at the moment is very strong."

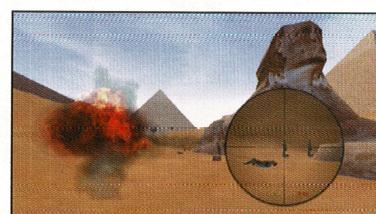
NovaLogic feels the D-Force again

AS NOVALOGIC looks to extend its product catalogue to other genres, the firm is gearing up for the launch of its biggest release to date on February 2nd.

Delta Force Land Warrior is set to ship 250,000 units throughout Europe on day one of release.

Marketing activity for the title will include print press ads, pre-order incentives and POS.

NovaLogic has also teamed up with Lan Arena for a DFLW National LAN tournament which will be held in April.



B&W to arrive next month?

Lionhead boss reveals that his eagerly awaited God sim is now in its final stages of production

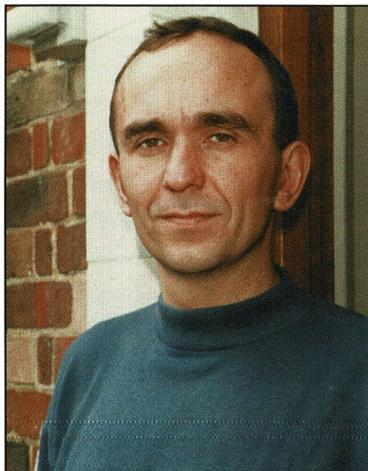
by Matt Camp

THE CREATOR of one of the most ambitious PC games to date has high hopes that Black and White will finally be released at the end of next month.

Speaking to MCV, Lionhead Studios' boss Peter Molyneux revealed that his God sim is complete and is now in the final three days of debugging.

"There are currently 387 bugs within the code which need to be removed before submission to EA," Molyneux explained.

"We are confident that these will be quickly removed and that Black and White will launch at the end of February."



MOLYNEUX: Finally letting his baby go in February

The title, which places the gamer in charge of a deity, has become famous not only for its ambitious gameplay, but also for

its long development time. According to Molyneux it has been time well spent "Black and White is a very ambitious game and we had to take our time to get it perfect. I can honestly say that it now looks fantastic and feedback has been amazingly optimistic."

Lionhead is now in the process of introducing the title to journalists and is already preparing itself for the first official reviews of the game.

"Expectations of the game have become huge," Molyneux added, "I must admit that it feels highly daunting to finally let this baby go."

Midas, meanwhile, is lining up the PlayStation version of the game for May.

Microsoft appoints MS&L for Xbox PR



MICROSOFT has appointed MS&L as the PR agency to handle the

European launch of its Xbox console and first party software.

Manning, Selvage and Lee will develop the communications strategy for the Xbox launch, headed by MS&L's director Dave Bennett who will report to head of Euro PR at Microsoft Paul Fox.

"We're really thrilled to be working with Microsoft on the launch of Xbox," said Bennett. "The console is already generating an incredible amount of excitement with the public and our job is really to work with Microsoft to develop long term communications strategies to harness that excitement."

"We selected MS&L for this crucial role because they demonstrated exceptional pan-European programme development and management experience, coupled with a deep understanding of the industry issues we'll be facing," added Paul Fox.

Black time for Interplay

INTERPLAY is set to roll out a clutch of Black Isle developed titles during February and March.

First to be released in what has been dubbed 'Black Isle month' is the Heart of Winter expansion disc for Icewind Dale. Priced at £19.99, it includes a new story and upgrades the graphical presentation and capabilities of the original Icewind Dale.

The disc will also be bundled with Icewind Dale at a price of £29.99, and with Baldur's Gate 2 DVD for £19.99.

Finally, the Baldur's Gate 2 Collectors Edition will be priced at £29.99 and will include the game, postcards, posters, limited



HARVEY: "Great start to the year"

edition trading cards, a T-shirt, hi-res artwork, the soundtrack and an additional character.

Euro marketing manager Harvey Lee said: "We've got so many great games coming out at Interplay this year and this is kicking the year off for us in great style."

Kuju heads for Oxford Street



STUDIO Kuju Entertainment has established an office in Central London as the firm plans to increase its creative output.

The developer, which is currently creating a racing title for PS2, is keeping its first studio in Godalming, Surrey along with the original development teams. The new Oxford Street division will be headed by former Argonaut producer Mark Washbrook.

"Opening a second studio in London allows us to expand, whilst maintaining the close, creative atmosphere that we believe is important in developing innovative titles," offered Ian Baverstock, new business development director at Kuju Entertainment. "With so much development talent in the city, London was an obvious choice."

Sony grabs studios

WITH key development talent already signed up for the Xbox, Sony this week moved to protect some of its key franchises, acquiring Crash creator Naughty Dog and sports specialist Red Zone Interactive.

The Naughty Dog deal sees the 30-strong team become a wholly owned subsidiary of SCEA.

Red Zone Interactive, which produces games under the 989 Sports label, will also be integrated into Sony's first party product development operation. The firm has been responsible for such franchises as NHL Faceoff, NBA Shootout and NFL Gameday.

Newswires

Sega promotes Turner

Sega Europe has promoted Alison Turner from head of European advertising to head of marketing in Europe, replacing Jeremy Stern who has left the games giant.

Sega Europe: 0208 995 3399

Microsoft targets TV

Microsoft is embarking upon its largest TV advertising campaign to date with a massive \$200 million budget. The drive is to reposition itself as a major player in the business software market.

Microsoft: 0870 601 0100

Codemasters grows

Codemasters has appointed Andrea Matthews as the firm's communications manager. This signing tips Codemasters' payroll over 400 staff.

Codemasters: 01926 814132

Tornado adds Virgin

Digital distribution firm Tornado has added V2 Records to its growing roster of clients. Material from such artists as Tom Jones and Moby will be made available to retailers who install the Tornado retail kiosks.

Tornado: 01628 498600

New look for Future duo

Two of Future Publishing's magazines have been redesigned. Both What DVD and .net magazine have been given a new image and content overhaul.

Future: 01225 442244

Blue Byte's free chat

Blue Byte has issued a new free demo of its forthcoming Battle Isle: Andosia

War on its bluebyte.net website. The new download also features a free 'Chat and Play' lobby where fans of the game can have a good gossip.

Blue Byte: 0208 450 8822

MGS2 on Z.O.E.

Whilst Konami in the US are deciding whether to include a playable demo of MGS2 with its forthcoming Zone of Enders game, it has been confirmed by the publisher that the freebie will be made available in Europe.

Konami: 0208 582 5573

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INFOGRAMES
Motion

**Newswires****EA wins again**

Electronic Arts has won an award at the British Market Research Awards 2001. The company picked up the snappily titled award for Innovation in PC Users Segmentation Study.

EA: 01932 450000

New Kingdom

Phantagram's RPG Kingdom Under Fire has been upgraded thanks to a new patch available from the kingdomunderfire.com website. Version 1.07a offers general bug fixes and improves enemy AI.

Phantagram: 0208 429 4455

One more for MVC

High street retail chain MVC has opened its 87th store. The event in Redhill, Surrey was marked with the handing over of a £45,000 cheque to the children's charity Make a Wish.

MVC: 0208 424 0101

Pure signing

Pure Entertainment, operator of the freeloader.com website has added two to its senior management team. Vincent Turco and Terry Blow join as VP of sales and marketing and chief technology officer respectively.

Pure Entertainment: 0207 663 3900

Gameloft gets hip

Online gaming portal Gameloft.com has launched a sequel to its popular DJ game. DJ Nights – The Hip Hop Sessions boasts new characters, new game modes and new tracks to er, get down to.

Gameloft: 01483 549026

Midway's PSOne bargains

Midway has launched a new range of budget software titles for the PSOne



console under the Midway Classics banner. In-house titles such as Ready 2 Rumble Boxing, Hydro Thunder and Mortal Kombat Trilogy will hit shelves in March at £9.99.

Midway: 0207 938 4488

Sony's dog fight

Sony has taken legal action against rival firms that produce 'illegal' versions of its advanced robotic dog Aibo. Toys such as Poo-Chi, dog.com and Meow-Chi are all under fire from the Japanese giant.

Sony: 0208 911 8200

Take 2 adds one

Take 2 Interactive has appointed Mark Allen as its UK PR executive. Allen was previously PR manager at Cryo.

Take 2: 01753 854444

Disney ups games focus

Increased output on existing formats for entertainment giant • New move into online gaming

by Matt Camp

DISNEY INTERACTIVE has outlined its ambitions for the year ahead - maximising its strengths on existing formats and genres, whilst also taking the plunge into online gaming.

The firm is looking to build its position within both the games and educational software sectors with titles based on some of its most popular character licences appearing on PSOne, PC, GBC and Dreamcast.

Toy Story is set to become a long-running franchise with Buzz Lightyear of Star Command due next month and Toy Story Racer scheduled for later in the year. Disney's new movies Emperor's



SAVAGE: "Disney is in a great position"

New Groove and Lion King 2 will be converted into platform games.

The firm's most ambitious plan for 2001 is the move into online



gaming. Based on Disney's summer movie Atlantis, the game will be available on PC and Dreamcast and will enable its core target audience of eight to twelve year olds to go head-to-head online within the Atlantis universe.

"Disney is in the great position of having at its disposal a huge number of instantly recognisable and high profile licences that make for excellent interactive entertainment," marketing manager Shan Savage told MCV.

Focus on kids



BUDGET software specialist Focus Multimedia has unveiled its first children's titles of the New Year as the publisher moves to increase its position within the kiddiesoft sector.

The Midlands-based firm has launched two PC titles from Ubi Soft's back-catalogue based on Warner Brothers' Animaniacs cartoon series. A Gigantic Adventure is a platformer that spoofs popular Hollywood movies, whilst Splatball is an arcade-style sport game with an online, multiplayer game mode. The Animaniacs range joins Focus' growing portfolio of children's titles which now includes Dennis the Menace, Playmobil and the evergreen Rayman licence. Both titles are priced at £9.99.



IT'S SAID that a girl can never have too many shoes and these delightful creations bring a whole new meaning to mobile gaming. Created by Helen Red Richards and Paul Rees the special Game Boy Colour shoes will be displayed at the Game Boy Colour Photographic Awards, due to be held at the Candid Arts gallery in London on February 8th. Some 30 finalists have been selected from across the UK for the awards, with the top three winners receiving cash prizes, as well as Game Boy hardware and software.

PS2 shortages hit Rage

AS RAGE continues to focus on publishing and developing its own titles, the firm admits that it is expecting to make a greater loss than was previously anticipated when it reveals its six monthly figures in March.

Rage announced this week that trading over the pre-Christmas period was broadly in line with its expectations. As a result of the

company currently concentrating on development, it was largely unaffected by the general softening of sales margins over the period. However, PS2 title Wild Wild Racing achieved lower sales due to hardware shortages.

Revenues for the current year to June 30th 2001 are expected to be broadly in line with current market expectations.

Students granted Sony PS2 support

SONY is to supply British students with free PS2 consoles.

The Network was established in 1997 providing 100 unions across the UK with a PlayStation and TV to demo games and play host to PlayStation-themed promotional nights. The next wave will see the same 100 unions fitted with a PlayStation 2 demo pod.

"Sony has worked with the Student PlayStation Network for three years and we are delighted to continue this successful partnership," offered David Wilson, head of PR at Sony. "PS2 offers the most exciting technology for video gaming and movies and the Student PlayStation Network is an ideal forum to enjoy the PS2."

CDV ramps up

CDV is looking to further establish itself in the UK marketplace in 2001, lining up a plethora of new titles that it feels will be well suited to the UK.

The firm's next release will be European Wars: Cossacks on March 30th. Following games will include a Sudden Strike expansion pack, Mystery of the Druids, Exploman and Alcatraz. 2002 will see CDV publish its first Xbox title.

"It's exciting times for CDV," commented UK president Terry Malham (above). "The success of Sudden Strike was enough to let the industry know that CDV has arrived."



“If snooker simulations are going to be this good, we’ll never want to play for real again”

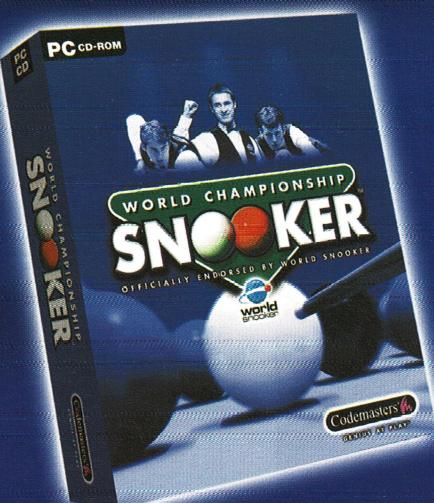
PC ZONE



“Thought Jimmy Whites 2 was as fab as snooker was going to get?
How wrong you were.
Codemasters’ World Championship Snooker looks set
to change how you see the green baize”

PC Format

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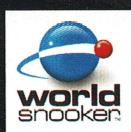
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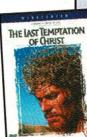
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January 29th		
Last Temptation Christ	18	Columbia
Steel Magnolias	15	Columbia
Four Weddings/Funeral	15	MGM
Braveheart	15	Fox
The Peacemaker	15	Polygram
Kids	18	Carlton
Brief Encounter	U	Carlton
Amidst	15	Polygram
February 5th		
The Sopranos 1-3	18	Warner
Flintstones Viva Rock	U	Columbia
The Firm	18	Disc
Carry on Doctor	PG	VCI
Carry on Abroad	PG	VCI
The Best Man	15	Columbia
Blackadder 3	15	BBC
February 12th		
Rocky Horror Show	18	Fox
Small Soldiers	PG	Columbia
Asterix vs. Caesar	U	Fox
The Saint Vol 2	PG	Carlton
February 19th		
Snatch	18	Columbia
Nightmare On Elm St.	18	Enter In Video
Nightmare on Elm St. 2	18	Enter In Video
Henry	18	Polygram
Seven	18	Enter In Video
February 26th		
Highlander	15	Warner Bros
Sid and Nancy	18	Carlton
Lost Horizon	15	Columbia
Dr. Who: Daleks	PG	BBC
March 5th		
Shaft	18	Warner
Blues Brothers	15	Warner
North by Northwest	PG	Warner
The Cell	18	Enter In Video

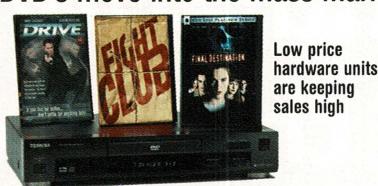
200K DVD players sold last month

British Retail Consortium reveals DVD's move into the mass market as the format leaps ahead

by Matt Camp

ACCORDING to industry reports, DVD achieved massive sales over Christmas, pushing the format into the mass market arena.

The British Retail Consortium has revealed that over 200,000 DVD players were sold in December and, thanks to the January sales where hardware units have been sold for as little as



Low price hardware units are keeping sales high

£99, the trend looks set to continue. It is now believed that the format is no longer a specialist item and that by the end of 2001, over three million homes will contain a DVD unit.

"We expected DVD to do well but these figures reveal an astonishingly quick adoption rate by British consumers, superceding historical rates of adoption for technologies such as CD and VCR," offered Warner Home Video's DVD category manager, Jason Mather. "We expect these fantastic sales to continue as more and more people buy DVD players and PS2 consoles."

DVD Chart Sales

Source: MRIB

1		The Patriot	15	Columbia TriStar
2. Gladiator	15	Universal		
3. M: I-2	15	Paramount		
4. The Green Mile	18	VWL		
5. American Beauty	18	Universal		
6. The Beach	15	TCFHE		
7. Chicken Run	U	Pathe		
8. The Perfect Storm	15	Warner		
9. The Matrix	15	Warner		
10. Stuart Little	U	Columbia		

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entertainment industry research consultants

Recommended DVD

As thousands of new outlets enter the DVD market, MCV puts the spotlight on a release likely to perform well in-store...

X-Men

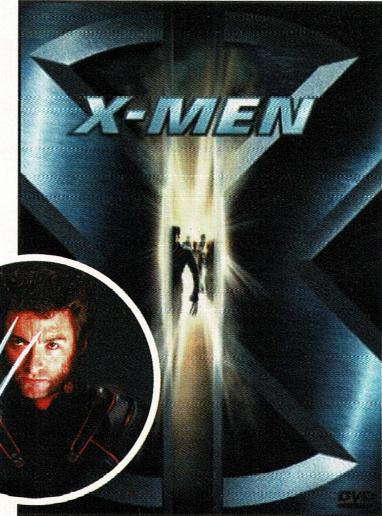
Distributor: Fox

Price: £19.99

Release Date: March 12th

Certificate: '12'

Buyer's Tip: Like The Matrix, X-Men is perfect for the DVD format. The plot is intelligent, the characters solid and the special effects simply stunning. The DVD is packed with additional features including commentary, screen tests, gallery, trailers and deleted scenes that can be cut back into the movie.



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Tesco battles against grey bans

Supermarket giant goes to the European Court of Justice for permission to sell 'luxury' goods

by Lisa Foster

IN A MOVE that could have implications for our market, supermarket giant Tesco last week went to the European Court of Justice for its right to sell cut-price Levi jeans against the firm's wishes.

The case is being viewed as a test of whether makers of other 'luxury goods' can dictate where and how their goods are sold.

Tesco has previously ranked the likes of Adidas and, closer to home, Sony over its decision to stock grey-imported products and sell these products cheaply to British consumers.



Supermarket takes its case to the European Court

In Sony's case, Tesco two years ago kicked off a retail-wide price drop on the original PlayStation

console when it began selling grey imports and has more recently started stocking grey PS2 stock.

Tesco director John Gildersleeve told The Times last week that a victory for the supermarket would bring about a dramatic change for UK shoppers: "We'll show the European Court how Levi and other brands are using archaic interpretations of the law to rip off British consumers."

At the same time, the Government last week launched a European campaign to abolish the law that stops supermarkets from selling brand-name goods such as Levi and Sony.

Argos catalogues more console, drops PC

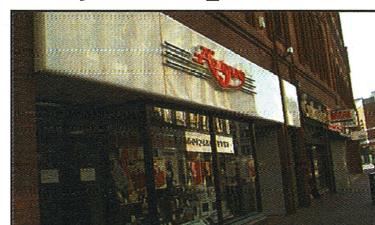
HIGH STREET catalogue shop Argos has revealed plans to focus strongly on the console market during 2001.

The firm has withdrawn most of its support for PC hardware and software to provide additional pages and warehouse space for Sega, Sony and Nintendo systems.

Speaking to MCV, Argos' Annie Measham explained the motive

behind the shift in focus: "Video games hardware and software has proved to be extremely successful for Argos. We feel that by reducing the emphasis on PC, we can offer consumers a larger variety of products for Dreamcast, PlayStation 2 and the forthcoming Game Boy Advance."

"The PC is not abandoned though as extended stock on



More console commitment from catalogue company hardware and software will be transferred to sister companies such as Jungle.com and Kays."



Talking Shop

Problems for the PC?

WHILE THE future of the console market is generally agreed to be bright, the future of the PC market is in debate. On one hand it has been predicted that domestic PC sales will see half the population online by the summer, while business computing appears to be slowing dramatically.

Intel is warning that 2001 will see its sales decline and Y2K issues have exhausted the IT budgets of many firms. This is a serious issue for indies as business computing is a major part of their livelihoods.

On the domestic PC front, the backlash against the Internet (surely the application which drives the PC market) is in full swing, thanks to paedophile rings and Internet adoptions. If the domestic market does reach 50 per cent penetration it could be argued that that's as far as it's gonna go. After all, there will be only a finite number of people willing to make the intellectual investment in learning how to use a computer. And if the Internet continues to appear to be a seedy, grubby place then that will limit its appeal.

Nobody wants to reach saturation point, but we could be getting there.

Dave McLean

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With a massive 4.6 billion Euros at stake, the most important factor for success is fully understanding the Japanese market from the outset -

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This is the reality of the Japanese market.





Unsigned: Wiggles by Innonics

**Name:** Wiggles**Developer:** Innonics (together with SEK, Berlin).**The brief:** Strategy game - includes four different worlds, five clan types, nine different characters and over 100 quests. Players must teach their clan how to survive in the underground world. Other features include over 30 production facilities, 20 tools, seven raw materials, 10 weapons and four fighting techniques.**How complete:** The game is in Beta-Stadium (release Q2), 80% finished.**In their words:** "Players must raise their own clan of dwarfs and arrange a daily schedule by determining how much they work and what they do in leisure time."**CV:** Innonics is based in Hanover and is also a shareholder of three development studios in Berlin, Hamburg and Hanover.**Contact:** Klaus Starke**Tel:** 0049 511 336137-41**Fax:** 0049 511 336137-77**Talent: Climax****Climax****Based:** Fareham (HQ)**Contact:** 01329 828777www.climax.co.uk

With three studios up and running, Climax has now expanded to 160 people and is still looking to recruit.

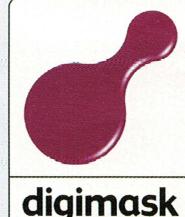
The Fareham HQ has just completed Theme Park on PC and several Game Boy titles. It is also making good progress with the firm's Xbox game, which will be published by Microsoft.

The Brighton studio is continuing to impress publishers and press alike with its Motorsports engine and has several titles in the works for PS2.

The most recent addition to the group is the Nottingham studio, created to develop the WarHammer Online project.

The company will be announcing further high profile signings across a variety of formats (PS2, Xbox, mobile phones, Interactive TV, Game Boy Advance) over the coming weeks and intends to continue its expansion plans during 2001. The possibility of acquiring other developers has not been ruled out.

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Motorola ready for new event

MCV and Develop sponsored Games Developer Seminar nears, Motorola calls for late entries

by Samantha Loveday

MOTOROLA has issued a last call for those companies and individuals interested in attending its MCV and Develop sponsored Games Developer Seminar.

Taking place at the Shaw Park Plaza, London over February 5th and 6th, the seminar agenda includes such topics as Mobile Technology Roadmap, Mobile Games Server, Application Developer Support, Motorola Product Roadmap, case studies and other important developer issues and talking points.



For just £200 you could be here

There will also be separate sessions on market strategies, structures, distribution and promotions held on the afternoon of Monday 5th. In addition, there's a party on the same evening at the AKA Bar in nearby Holborn, with transport arranged from the hotel.



The delegate cost for the two day seminar is £200 plus VAT. This includes attendance at the conference, lunch and refreshments, plus Monday night's party.

In addition, each full paying delegate may bring one colleague to the marketing session on Monday afternoon and to the party.

Those who are still keen to visit the event should log on to www.motorola.com/developers to register for the two days.

Fish takes flight

THE NEWLY reformed US developer Cinemaware has forged close links with British firm Crawfish to aid development of its latest game *Wings*.

Crawfish is still in the early stages of development of the World War 1 flying game, which will be published on the Game Boy Advance.

Cinemaware is currently in discussions with a number of publishers to establish distribution for the brand.

Crawfish MD Cameron Sheppard said: "The Cinemaware brand still evokes strong feelings for a lot of people."

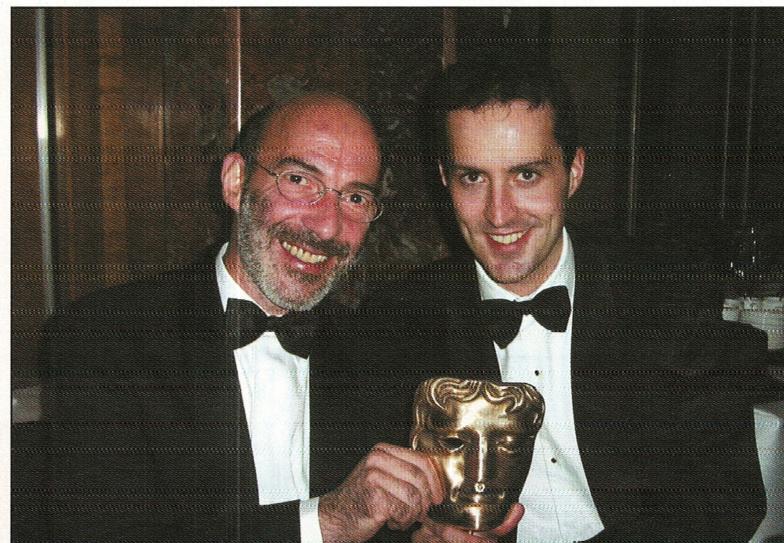
New show for LA

A TWO day conference exploring games content and technology is set to take place next week in Los Angeles.

Entertainment in the Interactive Age will be held on January 29-30th at USC's Davidson Conference Centre. It will be jointly hosted by the IDSA and the University of Southern California's Annenberg Centre for Communication.

Speakers include Peter Molyneux and David Perry from Shiny Entertainment.

Audio mix for Elixir



HANNIGAN (RIGHT): "Delighted to be creating the audio for such a high profile game as Republic"

SOUND and music specialist Audio Interactive has secured a deal with Elixir Studios to create the audio for two of its forthcoming projects, including *Republic - The Revolution*.

Republic has already attracted a great deal of interest in the specialist press and is being touted as something of a landmark game within the industry. The details of the second project Audio will be working on are yet to be announced.

"We are delighted to be creating the audio and music for such a high profile game," commented James Hannigan of Audio Interactive. "Republic, which is so innovative in all areas, offers us equal scope for creativity in terms of its audio. Based on our work so far for Republic, we are thrilled that our connection with Elixir will extend to their next project."

Elixir's Joe McDonagh added: "Audio Interactive has both experience and a terrific back catalogue of audio projects and so were a natural choice for us."

Artworks grabs Thing

ENTERPRISING Computer Artworks is set to develop an interactive version of *The Thing* for Universal Interactive Studios.

The title is due to be published worldwide by Konami in Q1 2002 and will cover all major platforms including PlayStation 2, Xbox, PC, GameCube and GBA.

The game will be a mixture of survival horror, action and science fiction. Computer Artworks will use its advanced cross platform engine to create the title. This will take advantage of the latest 3D hardware that is available.

"If ever there was a franchise with fantastic games potential, this is it," enthused William Latham, creative director of Computer Artworks. "Move over Alien, *The Thing* has arrived and it is crueler, more intelligent and more terrifying than any other previous opponent."

More Nikita

THE latest round of titles from leading Russian developer Nikita have been acquired for release by numerous local publishers.

Young Genius AB (Sweden), CD Projekt (Poland), Microforum (Italy) and Summit Computer Technology (Taiwan) will roll out the titles in respective territories.

Titles include Parkan: Iron Strategy, 3D quest Magic Turn, racing / action title Safari Biathlon and Blue Beard 1 and 2.





Sales drop hits US market

Sales fall for the first time in five years, as slow economic growth and PS2 shortages affect the US

by Samantha Loveday



THE US games industry experienced its first drop in sales in 2000 after five years of impressive growth, according to the NPD Group.

The study by the leading market research firm found that sales of hardware, software and accessories fell 5.8 per cent to \$6.5 billion in 2000 from \$6.9 billion in 1999. Sales of consoles declined more than 21 per cent to \$1.1

billion from \$1.4 billion in the previous year, while the number of units sold decreased to 8.2 million from 11.8 million.

Meanwhile, sales of game software fell to \$4.09 billion, a decrease of 2.6 per cent from \$4.2 billion in 1999.

NPD attributed the decline to the general slowdown in economic growth, not enough

PlayStation 2 machines and a 'wait and see' attitude from consumers. The company had originally projected that sales of computer and video games would reach between \$7.2 billion and \$7.5 billion in 2000.

However, on a unit basis the US market appears healthy. NPD said that by counting each machine, game and accessory as one unit, the number of total units sold grew to 191.4 million from 188.6 million the previous year.

CDV growth goes on

GERMAN publisher CDV Software is continuing to grow at a rapid rate, clinching three new production and publishing deals.

The three new titles are scheduled for release in 2002 and will add further weight to the company's burgeoning catalogue. The titles are 3D shooter Psychotoxic, God-style game Himmel und Hoelle and RPG Divine Divinity.

CDV is also expecting to announce gross sales of DM 30m next month, a healthy rise on last year.

Xplorys goes Crazy

XPLORYS has signed a distribution deal with German firm Nova Media for its Crazy 3D range. The firm has also bolstered the range with the addition of Crazy Dinosaurs.

The arrival of the PC CD-ROM budget game further extends the Crazy 3D range to 10 titles. Further games releases are being planned by Xplorys over the next couple of months.

Sony takes pirate stand

SONY Computer Entertainment Australia is to sue a Sydney market for allegedly allowing the sale of pirated computer games.

This is the first time that SCE Australia has actively taken action against a market operator as part of its \$1 million national anti-piracy campaign. The company said in a statement that the Federal Court had granted it leave to sue Paddy's Markets over the sale of pirated PlayStation games.

Earlier action was taken against two stallholders selling counterfeit products at two different markets. SCE MD Michael Ephraim said that the company would not hesitate to sue other market operators who continued to sell counterfeit goods.

"If we do not receive the full support and backing of the market proprietors, we will not hesitate to join the market operators in the court actions," he offered.



The Paddy's Market action in Sydney will be the first of its kind by SCE Australia

Japan unsure of Xbox

DESPISE a very positive response from the European and US trade to the unveiling of Xbox, it seems that the hype has yet to reach Japanese shores.

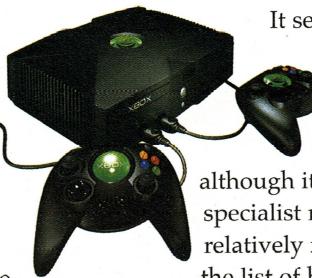
One local analyst has commented that, although the specialist press has been covering the console, little has appeared in the mainstream media.

"It's all a little distant to people in Japan," he offered.

"Microsoft will need to do an event over here first before most people take notice.

"I don't think any of the games I have seen would appeal to the Japanese gamers.

"Microsoft will need to



demonstrate some killer titles that real Japanese gamers would want, but even then I don't think that will be enough to generate widespread mass market appeal.

"It has to offer something that no other game machine has. Simply more of the same, even if it's better, won't be any good."

It seems that industry reaction to the Xbox in Japan has been mixed, although it appears the specialist media was relatively impressed with the list of hardware specs - and J Allard told MCV he is confident cracking the territory will not be a problem.

Toy Fair returns to Nuremberg

THE annual International Toy Fair is set to kick off in Nuremberg on February 1st.

The show will follow on from its UK counterpart, which is now running at ExCel, and will run through until February 6th. Over one million toy products are presented every year.

The show attracts over 50,000 trade visitors from across the world and boasts some 3,000 international exhibitors.

For more information on the Toy Fair, access www.toyfair.de.



Some 50,000 visitors will attend the 2001 event



American Psycho

Mike Sabine sits up and takes notice of the new Rockstar on the block...

A Rockstar is Born

"LET'S MAKE SWEET music and act like royalty." I heard that in a video game I was playing to write this column. The appeal is that it's a classic American defence mechanism.

Whenever a Brit argues that American football should not be so named because it's not played with the feet, we Yanks (because we have no argument) cannot help but try to change the subject to one of two things - your beleaguered dental practices or the perceived incestuous history of your royal family. Why? We don't really mean it, but we know it will annoy you as much as you have annoyed us.

Joining EA's Madden football game (please, spare me) and sensational snowboarding title SSX, both PlayStation 2 products under Take 2's Rockstar Games label have been among the top 10 best-selling PS2 games in the US in each of October, November and December.

Both Rockstar titles have a similar appeal. Smuggler's Run is about evading the cops while smuggling contraband - nudge, nudge, wink, wink. Although players do not smuggle drugs *per se*, the 'contraband' is sometimes computer parts, sometimes things that look nuclear-bomb related and other times it's the ever-dodgy-sounding medical supplies.

Midnight Club asks players to engage in illegal street racing through the streets of London and New York.

Both games were developed for Take 2 by Angel Studios, but what amazes me is that breaking the law is where the similarities end.

Smuggler's Run has the gorgeous graphics that made it part of pre-PS2-launch public relations efforts from Sony and Rockstar. It's a fantastic title that will deservedly sell well until Sony releases Gran Turismo on the format.

Midnight Club has the graphics to make it forgotten come summer, if not sooner. It is more of that PlayStation 1.5 ilk, certainly not of the perceived PlayStation 2 quality.

I believe much of Midnight Club's sales are due to the combination of the Rockstar and Angel Studios logos on the package of both games. PS2 owners assume Midnight Club will be just as enjoyable as Smuggler's Run. While not true, it's still very good news for Take 2 Interactive.

It seems that Rockstar has now officially become a brand.

Mike Sabine



Germany
Central Europe
USA Australia
France Italy
Benelux Japan



Wireless Man

Tim Green kicks off a new column focusing on the Mobile Internet sector...

It's a revolution

A NW wireLS colmn in MCV. Wot hav we bEn w8tin 4? Excuse my clumsy attempt at SMS. But this 'with it' introduction to MCV's latest slot is not without purpose.

The revolution of text messaging is the perfect riposte to anyone who doubts the staying power of wireless entertainment. But SMS is communication, you say, not fun and games. Stay with me.

According to the GSM Association the number of worldwide text messages sent in December was over 15 billion.

The mobile industry is praying that this impulse will transform phones into the something more. Which is great news for the games industry, of course. And yet, and yet. There's always that nagging doubt that wireless is the new CD-i - all the pieces fit but the public just don't get it. Well, I beg to differ. And here's why:

- The UK already has 40m mobile users.
- That Britsoft factor is no myth. The world really does love our ZX-80 based creativity and discipline. Ask Morpheme, Friendly Giants or Games Kitchen.
- The five network operators who paid £22.5bn for UMTS licences need help getting their cash back.
- The market is driven by teenagers - and younger. You know, that segment of the population which owns Game Boys and PSOnes.

If you've heard this all before, I apologise. It's my first column and there are generalisations to make. By week three I'll be into the finer points of Binary XML Content Format Specification. Whatever that means.

Tim Green

Net Prominence: Publishers

Source: GameCampaign
Internet publicity tracking for the games industry - www.gamecampaign.com

This chart shows the coverage given to publishers on videogame websites and is expressed as a percentage of the total number of websites. It provides a good indication to which publishers have the best chance of gaining global recognition for their brand identity.

TM	LM	Company	Coverage
1.	(1)	Microsoft	62%
2.	(2)	Sony	53%
3.	(3)	Nintendo	52%
4.	(4)	Sega	50%
5.	(5)	Electronic Arts	49%
6.	(6)	Sierra	42%
7.	(8)	Sci	42%
8.	(7)	Activision	41%
9.	(10)	Blizzard	39%
10.	(11)	Eidos	38%
11.	(9)	Acclaim	38%
12.	(13)	Virgin	38%
13.	(14)	Interplay	37%
14.	(15)	Id Software	36%
15.	(12)	Disney	36%

For more chart information go to <http://www.gamecampaign.com/> or call 01225 442600.

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nGame signs with Freeserve

Major coup for one of the UK's leading mobile games studios as it licences two key titles to portal

by Lisa Foster

MOBILE games developer nGame has signed a major content deal with Freeserve.

The company is providing the Freeserve WAP portal with Merchant Princes, its BAFTA nominated WAP game, plus its latest entertainment offering Chop Suey Kung Fu.

"nGame welcomes the deal with Freeserve and looks forward to



nGame has teamed up with Freeserve

working with them," said CEO John Brimacombe. "This deal is a watershed in the development of

nGame's titles, marking the beginning of their reach across the Internet and the expansion of their capabilities beyond the confines of their current WAP origins. It is the next step in nGame's vision of creating multi-platform interactive entertainment that is approachable, easy and has lasting appeal."

Freeserve's COO Frank Keeling added: "nGame is a valuable addition to our mobile Internet offering."

CDV adds Gamespy

CDV has introduced a new gaming portal. Gamespy.com provides players of the firm's games with a secure environment to play online and develop their own communities. CDV's Sudden Strike and its forthcoming Cossacks: European Wars will integrate with Gamespy Arcade Software so that online chatting and multiplayer gaming becomes easier. "We want as many people as possible to play Sudden Strike online - it's an exhilarating experience," said CDV's marketing manager Leo Zullo.

Station Nation hits the web

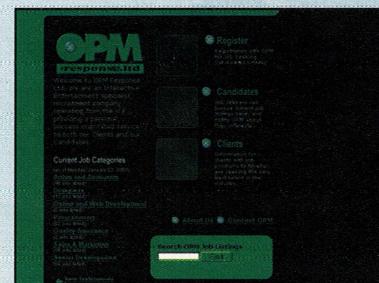
A NEW UK website dedicated to PSOne and PS2 has emerged.

Station Nation is the brainchild of Marvellous Publications, a new Macclesfield-based company. Station Nation was launched last month, backed by an advertising campaign on Manchester Picadilly and provides news, reviews and tips on PSOne and PS2.



"Unlike most publications, the staff of Station Nation don't have the luxury of receiving titles from the publishers for review and can offer a unique insight into whether a game is really worth the asking price," offered editor Brian Sharp.

Site Watch... OPM



www.opmjobs.com The online portal of recruitment agency OPM provides an extensive and easy to use service.

The site has been designed with simplicity in mind. All fields of the interactive entertainment industry have been split into seven different zones for quick location of specific job types, while

the number of vacancies that can be found in that field are also listed.

Job categories include sales and marketing, QA, artists and animators and programmers. All available jobs are listed by title, location and salary and further clicking reveals a full job description and applicant requirements. OPM also promises that new jobs are added daily.

To help narrow down a job search further, a very handy search engine is included. This enables a user to view a list of jobs that contain key words or phrases.

To apply for a job through OPM, the user must register. This is made simple thanks to a quick application form.

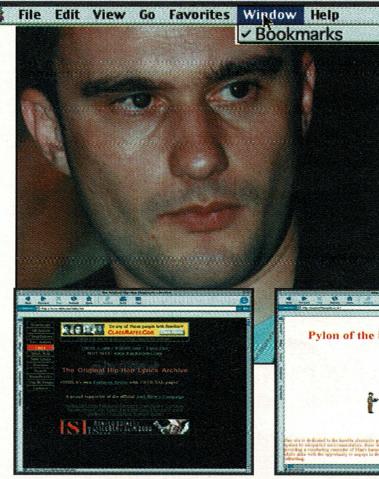
Despite its no-fuss, clinical appearance, opmjobs.com is a friendly site that caters for both job seeker and employer.



Finding a new job is just a click away



Rating 5/5



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Bookmarks: Stephen Pierce

Editor, PSW, Computec Media

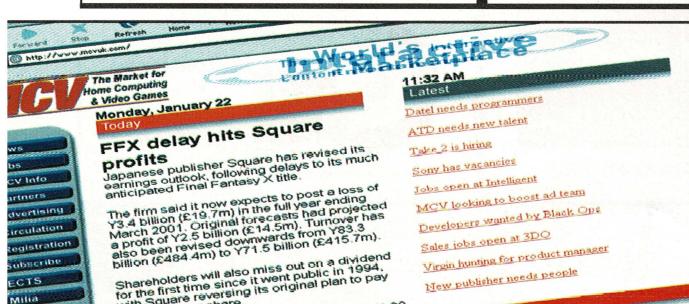
www.ohhla.com/index.htm I find this hip-hop lyrics site invaluable for regaling my lady friend with DIY versions of all my Pharoah Monch favourites. Reworked, of course, with a subtle Midlands twang.



<http://pylonofthemonth.co.uk> Perfect for those with an interest in pylons. Loads of images that truly capture the majesty of criss-crossing metal and much pontificating on 'the fascinating and rewarding hobby of electricity pylon number collecting'.

www.sleazeration.com/sleaze.html

Painfully hip music, clubs, movies and clobber are covered and it offers a true underground alternative to the continued mainstreamery of The Face and ID. The fact that I work for Sleaze from time to time is purely coincidental.



WWW.MCVUK.COM

IT'S THE ONLY PLACE TO GO FOR DAILY INDUSTRY NEWS

The new MCV international website provides fresh exclusive content every morning, plus a digest of the latest news from the world's leading business and games sites around the world.

FROM WALL STREET TO DAILY RADAR... IT'S ALL HERE

MCV MEDIA

ACTIVATING EURO HITS

Having rebuilt its European presence from scratch, Activision capped its comeback with a storming performance in the console chart in the second half of last year. And more is promised during 2001. **Ronnie Dungan** reports...

SEEING Activision in second place in the console market share chart is a bit like seeing Tottenham at the top of the Premiership. You know it's not a true reflection of where the balance of power lies, you know that it's just a blip.

But for three months last year Activision did just that, grabbing 17 per cent of the UK console market and only Nintendo held it off the top spot. During that time it scored two PlayStation number ones with X-Men and Spiderman and was high in the charts with Tony Hawk's Skateboarding, Tenchu 2 and Star Trek: Invasion. Some blip.

It's in sharp contrast to the usual performance from a publisher which has always traditionally depended on the PC market for the bulk of its revenue. Around 18 months ago the firm decided that the console market was where it needed to be if it was to remain a force in games publishing.

"The balance of our business has changed," says senior vice president of international publishing Scott Dodkins. "If you go back to Activision of even 18 months before we launched Tony Hawk, we were seen as an honest to goodness PC publisher with some good titles, trying a few attempts into the console market. But nothing really broke until Tony Hawk's in September '99. So in the months from then, the pendulum of our product mix has moved very much towards console."

So much so that console titles now dominate the firm's publishing schedule. The seeds sown some 18 months ago are beginning to bear fruit.

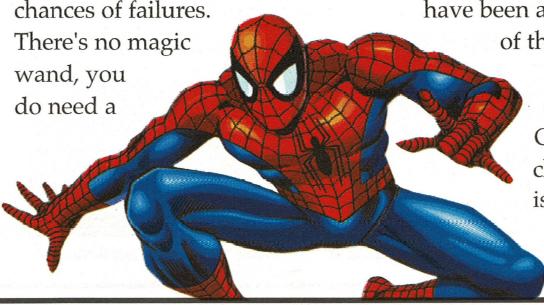


"We're still serious about PC and we have some good titles to come. But we have been fortunate in the console titles we have bought to market. The split of our European business is 60:40 now in favour of console."

Dodkins attributes the change of tactics to the arrival of Ron Doornink as chief operating officer in 1998, who saw that the firm needed to change direction if it was even to survive.

"He set about changing the philosophy and the first thing was how we run our product development and selection. We back the winners and, through management actions, minimise the chances of failures.

There's no magic wand, you do need a



We hope to back the winners and minimise the chance of failures.

Scott Dodkins

degree of luck, but you also need good thinking to make the luck actually happen."

The firm's re-appearance at the top table of publishers has not been brought about by any huge increase in marketing spend either.

"We are spending more in absolute terms, our business is bigger, but the percentage we're spending is smaller. We are being more selective and because of the product mix, in some ways we can get better value from console marketing than you can from PC."

Strategically, the firm is now driven by a global strategy from the US. A cliché though it is, the firm is thinking globally and acting locally. Which means that franchises such as Tony Hawk have been a success on both sides of the Atlantic.

"We work very closely with the US. One of the strategic changes in our business is that we're much more interwoven with the US business.

part of the directional change has been the development of what we call global brand marketing. All the company's strategic marketing is done out of Santa Monica, we then are responsible for territory implementation.

Having had such a corking 1999, expectations for the European division will be even higher this year, and the bar will be raised again by the US parent. But Dodkins believes the firm has another good product slate for this year and can produce the goods.

Key to this new, vibrant, Activision Europe is a move to a new Euro HQ in Slough, which Dodkins believes will go a long way to helping attract the right kind of people to bring the business on. And the future should include more external development deals, the addition of more affiliates to its publishing roster and, yes, more hits.

"Success breeds success. When people are looking for a publishing partner, whereas 18 months Activision may not have readily come to mind, it does now."



"The concept of Activision Europe was very much at arms length from the US. The links are now stronger."

"A key element to



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PEOPLE POWER

Good staff are the lifeblood of any company and any industry. But finding new employees suited to your particular requirements is often a tricky business, particularly in a market that is constantly changing, where new technologies are always emerging and different market sectors are regularly targeted. **Lisa Foster** spoke to both recruitment agencies and those responsible for hiring staff to find out the recruitment problems that are currently facing the interactive entertainment market...

Has recruitment in our market changed over the past couple of years?

"I have noticed a lot more companies becoming open to 'outsiders'. Companies are beginning to realise that as the different entertainment industries converge and the expansion on to emerging technology formats continue, wider skills are now required to successfully market/sell games."

Ian Goodall, Aardvark Swift

"The market has become more saturated and so competition has gone up for the best candidates. However, over the last six months big developers and publishers have taken the edge as they can provide the security and peace of mind that many of the smaller developers cannot always provide."

Stephen Harrison-Mirfield, Codemasters

"Definitely. Employees are looking to travel less to work each day, work from home more and if possible to get along with their colleagues. People who are in happy work environments are much more productive. Bosses have recognised this and do what they can to help."

Rachael Gadsden, Interactive Selection

What are the benefits of using a recruitment agency?

"We save clients time, money and resources. Quality candidates are job-matched properly. We provide personal information and demo work for all development candidates. We provide an advisory service on salary and other employment issues from expert consultants. And in case you were wondering, yes, I do use agencies to hire my own staff."

Kim Adcock, OPM Response

"Agencies can be expensive and supply staff who are moving for the wrong reasons. Direct applicants tend to come for solid reasons, rather than just for the money."

Stephen Harrison-Mirfield

"Recruitment agencies are much like estate agents; everyone uses them, although in a perfect world they wouldn't exist. Some are disturbingly poor for employers and candidates alike and I sometimes feel that they simply type a job title into a database and churn out all CVs on file that were once deemed suitable for such a role. Sadly, they might have someone great lurking, so we waste a lot of time trawling through all the CVs we are sent. However, the good agencies spend some time getting to know specific needs, likes and dislikes of an employer and we are learning who they are."

Rob Davies, Hothouse Studios

What is your view of the current state of recruitment in our market?

"The market is currently buoyant and it's an ideal time for people from outside of the industry to get in."

Stephen Harrison-Mirfield

"It is possible to bring in talented people from other industries for certain positions. However, for some very key positions, such as console programmer, it is impossible to source people from any other industry."

Pascal Cranney, Interactive Selection

"Recruitment in a specialist industry like video games is difficult at the best of times. With the exodus of staff recently due to the boom in New Media and uncertainty in the games industry, the shortage of candidates has worsened over the last 12 months."

Ian Goodall

What kind of staff is there currently a shortage of?

"There is particularly a shortage of brand managers and 'old-fashioned' product managers - that is, marketers involved from concept to launch, not just with boxed products."

Ian Goodall

"Artists, programmers and games designers. Good ones are not easy to find."

Stephen Harrison-Mirfield

"Without a doubt, good programming staff are, and always have been, in very high demand."

Pascal Cranney

"Programmers, programmers, programmers..."

Kim Adcock

What kind of staff is there currently a surplus of?

"Website designers who want to make/produce games."

Kim Adcock

"There is almost never a surplus, in my experience. Even with massive redundancies in one particular month, nearly all staff find a job inside four to six weeks."

David Smith, Interactive Selection

"On the art side, there is always a huge number of wannabes for junior roles, many self-taught on software packages. Artists who can demonstrate a flair across several media (you know, actually use a pencil and paints) are fewer."

Rob Davies

"None, although it is easier to find QA Technicians as many people use it as a way into the business."

Stephen Harrison-Mirfield

Is it easy to find staff at present?

"Codemasters constantly has immediate-start vacancies available for experience programmers, artists and associated developers. It's never easy to find good staff and the market for experienced personnel is tightening. We've been very successful in looking at other areas to find staff, graduates being a key example."

Stephen Harrison-Mirfield

"Certain staff are easier to find than others, as with any industry. Experienced marketers appear to be more scarce than sales people at the moment, but it really changes from quarter to quarter. If you are very creative and proactive, the right staff can always be found."

Ian Goodall

"We are currently on something of a recruitment drive, looking for staff across a wide range of positions. We have noticed that good project managers and producers seem to be few and far between right now and anyone interested should contact us!"

Rob Davies

"There's always plenty of people who are keen to hear from agencies on a regular basis, whether they are actively seeking a new job or just interested in what's going on in the industry. It helps them to keep a finger on the pulse."

Rachael Gadsden

"It's never easy in a growing industry where demand simply outstrips supply. However, there are some exceptional candidates particularly from Internet business sectors looking to come into an industry which they consider to be the cutting edge of technology."

Kim Adcock

(Below from left): Rachael Gadsden, Interactive Selection; Stephen Harrison-Mirfield, Codemasters; Rob Davies, Hothouse Studios

The market has become saturated and competition for good staff has increased.

**Stephen Harrison-Mirfield,
Codemasters**





HOME IMPROVEMENT

Is training common in our industry?

No, not really. Training does occur obviously, but it seems to happen more by chance or because of persistent members of staff, rather than a considered decision by the heads of companies as a way of developing and encouraging their team.

As the industry has developed, has it become more common - or less?

It is becoming more common. The companies we are currently working with see training as a great benefit to their staff. I'm happy to say that the decision makers are starting to realise training is a tangible investment. Developing your staff and creating a good career path within your company creates loyalty.

Are there different types of training available, or is it 'one size fits all'?

We create a tailor-made plan for each company that we work with. Although we are talking about businesses in the same industry, their aims and objectives are all very different. To ensure we create a training plan that achieves all of those, we have to have flexibility.

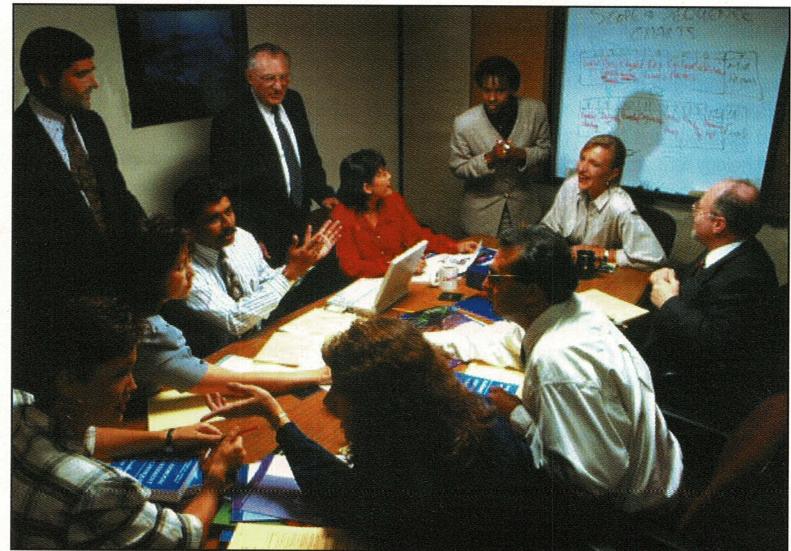
Can the industry benefit from using the many training companies that work with other industries, or do you think specialists in our market are required?

I would say that all training is good training, to a degree. Over the years I have attended many training courses and each course taught me something useful, however much of the information was inappropriate as the trainers generalised. With specialist training, that doesn't happen. Our courses are all industry specific and company specific. We cater for teams or individuals. We understand the needs of retailers, publishers and distributors, which not many 'outside' training companies do.

What is the biggest factor that stops companies using training firms?

There aren't many companies that don't see the value of it. Training is a fantastic way to motivate and retain good staff and can be a major part of career development. Many firms offer similar benefit packages now and so many people joining this industry expect more than that; they want a career plan and want to know how the company is going to help them achieve it.

Is the interactive entertainment industry making the most of its own personnel or does a lack of foresight by employers mean that people from other industries always seem more attractive? **MCV** asked Ann Hurley of specialist training outfit E-M Power...



Training is a good way to motivate and retain good staff and can be a major part of career development

Is it worth the money?

I believe you get what you pay for.

How do staff react to being sent on courses; is there ever any resentment?

Not normally. Most staff see it as a break from the office. We do make it as pleasurable as possible and prefer to create the training in an off-site situation. The training is very intensive so it usually helps if the delegates get a weekend to recuperate before they return to the office!

How does a games company monitor the value of a training course for its staff?

With us, quite easily. We keep in contact with the delegates every 6-8 weeks after completion of their course to ensure that work ethics and skill sets they have learned are being put into practice. An overview report is given to the line managers to assist them in directing their staff going forward.

When staff return, are they really 'different' and for how long?

Yes they are really different! We work not only on skill sets but the work ethic and personal development. We work on the theory that every day at work can be a good day if you set it up that way. So yes, you could say it has changed people's outlook into the way they conduct themselves. How long does it last? It depends on the individual and their line manager. We're finding that companies we worked with 12 months ago are still experiencing the 'feel good factor'.

Which professions within the games business need training the most or have the greatest demand for training?

If you work on the basis that a lot of people in this industry have moved up the ranks and just 'got on with it' the best way they

knew how, then most personnel - no matter what status - can always benefit from some kind of training. Senior management, sales teams, marketing, producers, customer services, accounts departments. All of them can benefit.

Would you agree with the claim that this industry doesn't invest in its personnel enough?

I think that is a true statement. I think the salary packages are great compared to other industries but, as I said earlier, in the current climate that is just not enough. Motivation and retention, train them and nurture them... that's true people investment.

What can an external training agency bring to staff development that a well-organised personnel department cannot do itself?

Fresh eyes and ears. We find in the initial consultation (we interview all potential delegates individually) that the delegates are very open with their hopes and aspirations, which allows us to recommend appropriately.

I believe sometimes staff think politically when talking to internal personnel departments, maybe not wanting to expose their weaknesses. When they talk to us they ask us how we can help them to overcome those weaknesses.

Empower is a training company dedicated to changing and improving the way CRM, sales, development and management teams handle themselves within the business environment. For more information call 01625 669641

Empower



“

Motivation and retention, train them and nurture them... that's true staff investment.

Ann Hurley

99

Hurley's E-M Power offers training courses tailored to our market

MORE THAN A CV

From no agencies to pioneers. From a sensible market to a rush for names. And back again. **Lis Welsh**, managing director of Answers Recruitment, offers a highly personal view of how things have unfolded in her sector over the past decade...

TEN YEARS ago there were no recruitment agencies working in the games industry.

It was an evolving marketplace where personnel introductions were made over a beer at ECTS or the latest press event. There was no professional place to go to find alternative employment. Clients had little experience of dealing with recruitment agencies and many companies did not have their own HR departments to deal with this vital area of their business.

Those that had tried to work with agencies outside of the industry felt they had not appreciated the ever-changing needs of our market and so didn't understand the type of applicant that suited them best... time and money were wasted.

Then the first agencies entered the interactive entertainment market and a new kind of industry recruitment technique arrived.

Instead of going directly to clients via the industry grapevine, applicants came to the specialists.

In our case, they were asked to attend a two-three hour interview to discuss their strengths, weaknesses, career aims and objectives and plan how together they might find them the desired opportunity.

With good agencies, candidates were given a thorough grilling, they were psychometric tested and given a full briefing. They were then packaged, bound and presented to the client in a professional

working document of the highest quality. All this took time - at least two weeks.

Soon, more agencies identified the potential within the market place and decided they wanted a slice of the cake.

Often, face-to-face interviewing went out of the window, psychometric testing never came into it and consultant interview/briefing notes were unheard of. And the fax race began.

CVs were sent out without requesting permission from candidates and clients were greeted with reams of faxed CVs on their desks every morning as they walked into their office... In my view many of the 'new' recruitment agencies were running around like headless chickens, desperate

not to be beaten to the finishing post by another rival agency.

Quality, service and confidentiality were starting to be left off the features list of the industry agencies.

But, more recently, consolidation, competition and a need to recruit high quality personnel in a very demanding market has changed many companies' attitudes to the service companies they work with. They now demand quality and service delivered at an affordable price in a professional manner with some guarantees.

The industry has gone full circle and are now operating in a competitive, recruitment market where standards are high and if an agency can't perform it will miss the boat. ◀



WELSH: "If an agency can't perform, it will miss the boat"

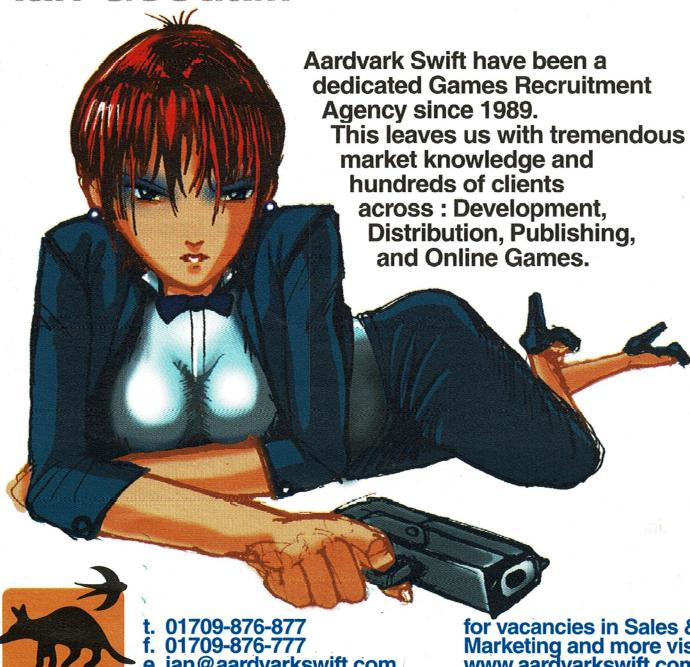
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THE JOBSWORTHS

Recruitment and training agencies provide vital services in any industry - filling vacancies effectively, finding new challenges for bored employees and sharpening staff skills. **MCV** gives an overview of the key players in the interactive entertainment sector...

Aardvark Swift Consulting

Tel: 01709 876877



Website: www.aardvarkswift.com

Specialities: Established in 1989 and headquartered in South Yorkshire, Aardvark Swift is a recruitment consultancy which specialises in the games and interactive entertainment industry. The company's client portfolio encompasses organisations based both in the UK and overseas, ranging

from small start-ups to internationally known and respected blue chip operations such as Sony, Sega and Microsoft. The company claims to be the first agency to dedicate its services to the games industry and boasts of being committed to providing a professional and cost-effective service to the market. Overseas, Aardvark Swift has contacts and employment opportunities in the US, Canada, Japan, Ireland, Denmark, Sweden, France, Italy, Spain, Germany and Australia.

Answers Recruitment

Tel: 01604 771122



Website: www.answers-recruitment.com
Specialities: Answers has 16 years experience in the games industry and new media, plus 21 years of recruitment expertise. All candidates are fully interviewed, psychometric tested and their technical skills assessed. The company claims that it gets to know its clients to

ensure that the 'right' people are found to fit in with a particular environment. Answers boasts of widely marketing the company, with several high profile recruitment sites bringing in new talent to the market. The agency specialises in middle management to executive positions in sales, marketing, IT, new media, games development, communications and engineering. A French office based in central Paris deals with Continental European recruitment opportunities.

Cyba3

Tel: 01924 500999



Website: www.cyba3.co.uk

Specialities:

Cyba3 was founded in 1995 in response to the demand for skilled 3D animators and modellers within the games and film industries. Its main areas of training are concentrated on 3D Studio Max, AutoCAD, Adobe and CG software, both on and off site. Since then Cyba3 has built up a strong reputation in the 3D digital training arena. The company's

founder Stewart McLean has been using 3D Studio and AutoCAD since the late '80s. Damian Leach, the firm's distance learning manager, sees the coming years as a crucial time. "With the growth of the computer graphics industry in both film and games, there will be a severe shortage of skilled animators and modellers over the next five years," he said. "We will be doing our utmost to help fill that need by expanding with the industry and introducing more courses concentrating on the needs of the graphics business."

E-M Power

Tel: 01625 669641



Website: Under reconstruction

Specialities: E-M Power is a training company dedicated to changing and improving the way CRM, sales, development and management teams handle themselves with the business environment. Established by former Gremlin Interactive commercial director

Ann Hurley, its philosophy is to create 'empowerment' within the workplace, making a difference to the way that people do business and realising the long-term positive consequences of trading with integrity. The firm offers in-depth consultation to establish the varied training needs of individuals within teams, create a training schedule to achieve those aims and objectives and remains in contact with the company and team to ensure new skill sets are actioned.



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- **Programmers:** 74 active vacancies throughout the UK and Europe, salaries from £20k - £50K + package www.opmjobs.com/cgi_bin/view_jobs.cgi?Programmers

- **Web Development:** 5 active vacancies, throughout the UK, salaries from £20 - £30K www.opmjobs.com/cgi_bin/view_jobs.cgi?Online_and_Web_Development.
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ISP Ltd.

Tel: 01892 549898



Website: www.ispcomputing.co.uk
Specialties: ISP was established in 1990 and boasts specialist divisions and recruitment services. The games industry division was set up in 1997 and provides staff for games development on all platforms, covering producers, designers, programmers,

artists, animators and testers. The firm's database of clients includes most of the major players and many indie studios throughout the UK and Europe. Through ISP's other divisions, it provides personnel for IT, communications and networking organisations. ISP provides personnel at all levels, both permanent and contract-based and in many cases works with clients on a sole or preferred supplier basis.

Interactive Selection

Tel: 0500 111751/020 8944 7777



Website: www.Games-JOBs.com
Specialties: Interactive Selection is an executive search and recruitment company working only in games and interactive entertainment. Established in 1996, the company operates in the UK, Europe and the US with offices in London, Leicester and Northampton in the UK and associate offices in California, USA.

Members of both ELSPA and the REC, the recruitment industry's federation, Interactive Selection is dedicated to finding opportunities for candidates in over 600 client companies. Interactive Selection does not advertise, but rather relies on word of mouth and its reputation within the market. New clients include online publishers and distributors of interactive entertainment, covering online gaming, console, ISPs, mobile games, entertainment and ecommerce sites, plus interactive, cable and satellite TV.

Krystal (KRS)

Tel: 020 8599 8691



Website: www.krystals.net
Specialties: Established since 1995, Krystal has only ever specialised in servicing the games industry with experience personnel and raw talent (University graduates). According to the

company, what makes Krystal different from some of its competitors is that it has a sister games development company that allows Krystal to talk to clients on a game development level. Krystal services clients in the UK, Europe, the US and Australia.

OPM Response

Tel: 01206 544044



Website: www.opmjobs.com
Specialties: OPM specialises in placing experienced candidates and raw talent at the cutting edge of development, publishing and broadcast, covering PC, console, Internet, interactive TV and WAP sectors, throughout the UK and Europe. Already well established in the European industry, OPM

has vacancies in development, sales and marketing, ranging from graduate to managing director level and with salaries covering the spectrum from £14K to £100K+. OPM's consultants contact every candidate before sending out CVs and a high proportion of clients register exclusively. The website contains testimonials, job specifications and a guide to registering online.

Pelican Consultants

Tel: 020 8423 3400



Website: www.pelican-consultants.com
Specialties: Pelican Consultants specialises in interactive entertainment and new media. The firm's consultants have a thorough knowledge of the industry's specific requirements, enabling it to complete a large number of search and selection assignments for many organisations within the market. The company utilises many different methods -

search, selection, contingency, online and pipeline services. According to Pelican, this ensures that it is in touch with not only available talent, but also 'passive' talent within core sectors. By guaranteeing discretion to candidates, the firm boasts that highly qualified individuals choose to be exclusively on its database and this reputation has apparently led to clients becoming increasingly confident in the services Pelican can offer.

Tetra Recruitment

Tel: 01223 526912



Website: tetrarecruitment.com
Specialties: Tetra Recruitment claims to be at the forefront of the provision of staff to the interactive entertainment industry. It boasts of having a real understanding of the market, dealing with

all issues of recruitment. Clients include many major players, but Tetra strives to service smaller concerns who equally need high-end staff. Vacancies and candidates are taken on board globally, offering all areas of development and publishing recruitment.

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This is a perfect opportunity to further develop your technical skills and give a creative input into this growing company. Responsibilities will include day to day maintenance of the database, including a bespoke accounting programme, development and testing of our web site. The role involves a large amount of planning and co-ordination to support all IT activities in the company. Key skills will include working to deadlines, ability to pick up and run with new technologies, contribute to team meetings, excellent verbal and communication skills and a positive and enthusiastic attitude.

Any interest in these positions should be tendered in writing along with an up to date C.V. to Mr Spencer Guinchard, Managing Director, no later than 28th February 2001.

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Console Format Splits

ChartTrack - Week ending January 20th

ChartTrack

MCV offers a snapshot of ChartTrack's latest research of the UK games market....

Full Price Software - By Units

PlayStation	47.7%
PlayStation 2	18.1%
Game Boy Colour	16.4%
Dreamcast	10.9%
Nintendo 64	3.5%
Game Boy	3.2%

Budget Software - By Units

PlayStation	85.7%
Dreamcast	6.8%
Nintendo 64	4.8%
Game Boy Colour	1.8%
Game Boy	0.9%

Full Price Software - By Value

PlayStation	42.8%
PlayStation 2	25.1%
Game Boy Colour	12.8%
Dreamcast	12.2%
Nintendo 64	4.4%
Game Boy	2.6%

Budget Software - By Value

PlayStation	85.3%
Dreamcast	6.9%
Nintendo 64	5.2%
Game Boy Colour	1.8%
Game Boy	0.6%

CONSUMER WATCH

Consumer Watch is the weekly analysis of consumer buying intentions exclusive to **MCV**. In association with Games Domain, we ask the public which software releases they intend to purchase over the next month.



Which two current or future software releases are you intending to purchase over the next month?



Title	1st Choice	2nd Choice	Total Score
1. Rainbow 6: Rogue Spear	52	36	140
2. Worms World Party	30	31	91
3. Tekken	29	28	86
4. Spyro the Dragon 2	24	15	63
5. Crash Team Racing	18	25	61
6. F1 Racing Championship	15	28	58
7. Air Combat	18	21	57
8. Armored Core 2	17	23	57
9. Legend of Dragoon	21	12	54
10. Ultimate Fighting Championship	21	9	51
11. Heroes III Complete	17	14	48
12. Downhill Mountain Biking	10	25	45
13. Ducati World	17	11	45
14. Buzz Lightyear Star Command	8	21	37
15. Batman - Chaos in Gotham	14	7	35
16. Dragon's Lair: Timewarp	11	12	34
17. Vanishing Point	11	12	34
18. Harvest Moon	13	8	34
19. Batman of the Future	11	12	34
20. The Settlers 3 Collect	13	8	34

Total number of consumers who voted: 493

Voting took place between: January 13th & January 19th

Scoring System: Two points for every consumer voting a title as his/her first choice purchase, one point for every second choice



ConsumerWatch is published by MCV in association with Games Domain. For more information about Games Domain contact Nick DiCesare (sales@gamesdomain.com) or Richard Sutcliffe (rs@gamesdomain.com). Tel: 0121 326 0900



Were you impressed with the first look at the Microsoft Xbox?

Yes: 73% No: 27%

WHILE certain parts of the industry have offered opinion that Microsoft's recently unveiled Xbox console is either too big, too black, too American or - in some cases - all three, it seems that those who count are actually very impressed with what they've seen.

Some 73 per cent of the gamers surveyed last week were impressed with what they saw when Microsoft finally unveiled the Xbox earlier this month. And for a nation that is increasingly

adopting the Japanese 'small is better' theory, it appears consumers have been more swayed by the long list of hard-to-fault hardware specifications than the looks of the machine. Because, let's face it, the Xbox isn't petite.

Whatever J Allard says about wanting the console to sit beside every VCR unit, it's still more likely to be found in many more bedrooms than the communal living area in the majority of houses in the UK.

But really we shouldn't be worrying about its looks. What counts, as every used car salesman worth his salt will tell you, is what's under the bonnet. And in Xbox's case it's an 8Gb hard drive, an Nvidia graphics processing unit and an Intel 733MHz processor. No true gamer will be complaining about that little lot.

Samantha Loveday

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*return prices correct at time of going to press



91-258440

11-14 February 2001



Nintendo introduces new UK team

...plus Smartdog bolsters its studio, Sambrook joins Panlok, Take 2 hires Jones, Penemo moves to KDG and AllintheGame is hiring



NINTENDO □ As the Japanese software giant establishes its new office in the UK, Nintendo has announced five further appointments at its Chertsey base. **ANDY YATES** (above left) heads the trade marketing team as trade marketing controller with **PHILLIP STEPHENS** as trade marketing manager. **LINDA HASSALL** (above right) and **DARREN WILLIAMS**.



GORTON have been signed as national account controller and national account manager respectively whilst **TOM PEARCE** has been named as the firm's finance manager. All five have joined from Nintendo's current UK distributor THE Games and will report to Nintendo's new UK general manager **ANDY WILLIAMS**.

RADICA □ **TIM WOOD** has been appointed as the marketing executive of Radica UK. Wood will report directly to marketing manager **JON BURCHAM**.

linguistic advisors to work on all future foreign language productions.

ALLINTHEGAME □ As the firm expands further into foreign language production work, AllintheGame is currently seeking foreign language directors and

TAKE 2 □ As the software publisher further expands its international sales team, Take 2 Interactive has announced the appointment of **DEBBIE JONES**. She will report directly to **SERHAD KORO**.

COOL BEANS WORLD □ The web-based entertainment firm has hired the highly-rated comic book artist **SIMON BISELY**. Known for such projects as *Judge Dredd Vs Batman*, *Slaine*, *Lobo* and *Heavy Metal FAKK*, Bisely will help bolster the comic book and computer-generated storytelling site.

PANLOK □ Software protection firm PanLock has signed up **LOUISE SAMBROOK** as its new business manager. Her role will be to develop the operational structure within the firm.

ABBEY ROAD INTERACTIVE □ The DVD and digital production firm has appointed **SARAH LAYISH-MELAMED** as producer. She joins from Dorling Kindersley Interactive where she was QA co-ordinator and associate producer.



SMARTDOG □ The software developer has bolstered its studio with the signing of **DAVID SAUNDERS** and **ASHLEY ROUTLEDGE**. Saunders joins as technical director. Routledge meanwhile joins Smartdog as art director. Both will heading a team of 30 designers on multi format titles that are scheduled to appear in the autumn. The UK studio is expected to make a number of major announcements shortly.



VIRGIN INTERACTIVE □

The software publisher has appointed **DAN TAYLOR** as its new media manager. Taylor was previously a freelancer working with Lunch PR on such campaigns as the firm's Virgin Mary Christmas card campaign.



KDG □ Fast growing disc manufacturer KDG Mediatech has bolstered its sales department, with the signing of **NANA PENEMO** as its new account manager. He will report directly to sales director **IAN BROWNING** and joins the firm from Interplay.

Send your appointments to Matt.Camp@mcvuk.com or call 01992 535646.

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RETAIL GUIDE

On The Radar

Forthcoming releases with above average sales potential...

February

Phantasy Star Online DC Sega

An important title for the Dreamcast that combines an epic RPG plot with massive online game worlds.

Severance PC Codemasters

Severance breathes new life into the 3D adventure genre, with stunning looks and solid gameplay.

March

Pokemon G&S GBC Nintendo

Pokemon returns to the Game Boy Colour with Gold and Silver editions. Far superior than Red and Blue.

MDK2 PS2 Virgin

One of the few 3D action games for the PlayStation 2. Looks great and retains the weird sense of fun.

Wipeout Fusion PS2 Sony

The stylish and futuristic racer arrives on the PS2 with FMV-style graphics and intricate track design.

Daytona USA 2001 DC Sega

The classic arcade racing game is given a smart 128-bit make-over and full online gaming support.

Sonic Shuffle DC Sega

The title boasts Jet Set Radio visuals and a large selection of mini-games all hosted by the hedgehog.

Zelda - Seeds GBC Nintendo

At long last, the hugely popular RPG series returns to the Game Boy Colour in a brand new adventure.

Banjo-Tooie N64 Nintendo

The stars of one of the most popular platformers on the N64 finally returns in this far superior sequel.

Summer 2001

Gran Turismo 3 PS2 Sony

The superior sequel contains the gameplay of both PSOne titles, but next-gen FMV quality graphics.

Head Hunter DC Sega

Another ambitious adventure title from Sega set in LA featuring a cool, motorbike riding protagonist.

Silent Hill 2 PS2 Konami

The David Lynch-inspired horror game is made more disturbing thanks to shockingly real visuals.

Sonic Adventure 2 DC Sega

The eagerly awaited sequel promises to be faster, larger and even better looking than the original.

Contacts

3DO Europe0207 761 9300

Acclaim0207 344 5000

Activision01753 756100

CDV Software020 8880 4152

Codemasters01926 814132

Crave/SGV0208 968 8088

Crucial Ent.0161 941 1110

Cryo Interactive0121 250 5070

Disney Interactive0207 734 1133

Eidos Interactive0208 636 3000

Electronic Arts01932 450000

Empire0208 343 7337

EON Digital0700 436 6344

Hasbro Interactive0208 569 1234

Havas Interactive0118 920 9100

Infogrames0208 222 9700

Interplay0207 551 0000

JVC0207 240 3121

Konami0208 582 5573

Lego Media0208 600 7200

Microds0208 901 7326

Microsoft0870 601 0100

Midas Interactive01223 522000

Midway0207 938 4488

Nintendo01703 653377

Novalogic0207 405 1777

SCI0207 585 3308

Sega0208 995 3399

Sold Out0207 928 3993

Sony0207 533 1400

Take 2 Interactive01753 854444

THQ01483 767656

Titus0207 551 0000

TLC01293 651300

Ubi Soft0208 944 9000

Virgin Interactive0207 551 0000

ORDER TIPS

Final Fantasy 9 makes an eagerly awaited appearance on the PlayStation next month, along with the Natsume-developed Harvest Moon. Meanwhile, Mechwarrior 4 and Land Warrior bolster the PC...



Harvest Moon

GENERAL INFORMATION

Genre: RPG
Developer: Natsume
Publisher: Ubi Soft
Street date: February 2
Estimated street price: £24.99

PRODUCT INFORMATION

An enchanting game that creates a whole new genre - the farm sim. The player inherits a sleepy farm that he must return to its former glory. Seasons change, friends are made and cows are milked.

1 player **3+**

MARKETING SUPPORT

	TV	IN-STORE
RADIO	✗	✓
CINEMA	✗	✗
PRINT	✓	✗
	DIRECT	OUTDOOR
	✗	✗
	✓	✗

SALES POTENTIAL

A title that genuinely deserves success but in a world of the fast and the flash it may get lost on the shelves.



Final Fantasy 9

GENERAL INFORMATION

Genre: RPG
Developer: Squaresoft
Publisher: Infogrames
Street date: February 16
Estimated street price: £39.99

PRODUCT INFORMATION

Amazingly, Square's hugely successful RPG series has reached its ninth chapter (with a 10th in production for PS2). The title spans four discs and marks a return to a more traditional style of gameplay.

1 player **3+**

MARKETING SUPPORT

	TV	IN-STORE
RADIO	✓	✓
CINEMA	✗	✗
PRINT	✓	✗
	DIRECT	OUTDOOR
	✗	✗
	✓	✗

SALES POTENTIAL

Proving that the PSOne is still a major platform for new titles, FF9 will be a success. No question.



Phantasy Star Online

GENERAL INFORMATION

Genre: RPG
Developer: Sonic Team
Publisher: Sega
Street date: February 23
Estimated street price: £39.99

PRODUCT INFORMATION

PSO is the first home console game designed for online play. Emphasis is placed on co-operative play with up to four players from anywhere in the world joining forces to take on monsters and puzzles.

1/network **3+**

MARKETING SUPPORT

	TV	IN-STORE
RADIO	✗	✓
CINEMA	✗	✗
PRINT	✓	✗
	DIRECT	OUTDOOR
	✗	✗
	✓	✗

SALES POTENTIAL

In a word - stunning. An immensely important title for DC, which will surely be a massive success.



ECW Anarchy Rulz

GENERAL INFORMATION

Genre: Sport
Developer: Acclaim
Publisher: Acclaim
Street date: February 9
Estimated street price: £39.99

PRODUCT INFORMATION

This Extreme Championship Wrestling title features three game modes, over 30 wrestlers and a rather nifty feature to custom design wrestling characters. Graphics are attractive and solid.

2 player **11+**

MARKETING SUPPORT

	TV	IN-STORE
RADIO	✗	✓
CINEMA	✗	✗
PRINT	✓	✗
	DIRECT	OUTDOOR
	✗	✗
	✓	✗

SALES POTENTIAL

Dreamcast-owning wrestling fans will find much to keep them entertained here.



Mechwarrior 4

GENERAL INFORMATION

Genre: Action
Developer: Microsoft
Publisher: Microsoft
Street date: February 2
Estimated street price: £34.99

PRODUCT INFORMATION

This latest incarnation in the Mechwarrior series harks back to the classic days of gaming. Big-bugger robots with massive weapons killing other big robots. A simple premise that offers lasting gameplay.

1/network **11+**

MARKETING SUPPORT

	TV	IN-STORE
RADIO	✓	✓
CINEMA	✗	✗
PRINT	✓	✗
	DIRECT	OUTDOOR
	✗	✗
	✓	✗

SALES POTENTIAL

A real PC gamer's game. Shooter fans who like a large slice of strategy will be very happy here.



Delta Force: Land Warrior

GENERAL INFORMATION

Genre: Action
Developer: NovaLogic
Publisher: NovaLogic
Street date: February 2
Estimated street price: £34.99

PRODUCT INFORMATION

Land Warrior places the gamer in the role of an American Special Forces soldier with access to some serious weaponry. Numerous missions blend both action and strategy genres.

1/network **3+**

MARKETING SUPPORT

	TV	IN-STORE
RADIO	✗	✓
CINEMA	✗	✓
PRINT	✓	✗
	DIRECT	OUTDOOR
	✗	✗
	✓	✗

SALES POTENTIAL

A nice looking game that should keep fans of military hardware and strict missions entertained.

PLANET
DISTRIBUTION



nu:gen.

PC
CD-ROM

KEMCO

SEGA

Microsoft Mechs PC push

Forget Xbox for now. The latest in the **Mech Warrior** series is on the horizon. Also, watch out for **The Settlers IV** and NovaLogic's hotly-tipped **Delta Force - Land Warrior** on the PC format...

Title	Format	Genre	Publisher	Telephone	Distributor	Release Date	Developer
Armoured Core 2	PS2	Action	Ubi Soft	0208 944 9000	Pinnacle	February 2nd	From Software
Delta Force - Land Warrior	PC	Action	NovaLogic	0207 405 1777	Gauntlet	February 2nd	NovaLogic
Dinosaur's Us	GBC	Action	EA	01932 450000	Pinnacle	February 2nd	EA Games
Elmo in Grouchland	GBC	Action	Ubi Soft	0208 944 9000	Pinnacle	February 2nd	Ubi Soft
Gallarians	PSX	Action	Ubi Soft	0208 944 9000	Pinnacle	February 2nd	Ubi Soft
Gunbird 2	DC	Action	Virgin	0208 551 0000	Open	February 2nd	Capcom
Half Life	DC	Action	Havas	0118 920 9100	Gauntlet	February 2nd	Valve
Harvest Moon	PSX	RPG	Ubi Soft	0208 944 9000	Pinnacle	February 2nd	Ubi Soft
Heist	PC	Strategy	Virgin	0207 551 0000	Open	February 2nd	Virgin
Mech Warrior 4	PC	Action	Microsoft	0870 607 0700	Open	February 2nd	Microsoft
Merlin	GBC	Action	EA	01932 450000	Pinnacle	February 2nd	EA Games
Monaco Budget	PSX	Racing	Ubi Soft	0208 944 9000	Pinnacle	February 2nd	Ubi Soft
Pizza Connection 2	PC	Strategy	Virgin	0207 551 0000	Open	February 2nd	Virgin
Rainbow 6	DC	Strategy	Virgin	0207 551 0000	Open	February 2nd	Red Storm
The Settlers IV	PC	Strategy	Blue Byte	01604 633165	Gauntlet	February 2nd	Blue Byte
Dragon Tales	PSX	Action	Ubi Soft	0208 944 9000	Pinnacle	February 9th	Ubi Soft
ECW Anarchy Rulz	DC	Sport	Acclaim	0207 344 5000	Open	February 9th	Acclaim
Kasparov	PSX	Action	Virgin	0207 551 0000	Open	February 9th	Virgin
Phantasy Star Online	DC	RPG	Sega	0208 995 3399	Gem	February 9th	Sonic Team
Theme Park Inc.	PC	Strategy	EA	01932 450000	Pinnacle	February 9th	EA
Army Men-Toys In Space	PC	Strategy	Sold Out	0207 928 3993	Centresoft	February 16th	3DO
Army Men: Vikki's Adv.	GBC	Action	3DO	0207 761 9300	Gauntlet	February 16th	3DO
Dark Colony	PC	Strategy	Sold Out	0207 928 3993	Centresoft	February 16th	Take 2
Emperor's New Groove	PC	Action	Ubi Soft	0208 944 9000	Pinnacle	February 16th	Disney
Empire of the Groove	GBC	Action	Ubi Soft	0208 944 9000	Pinnacle	February 16th	Ubi Soft
Final Fantasy IX	PSX	RPG	Square	0208 962 1550	Centresoft	February 16th	Squaresoft
Flipper	PC	Action	Ubi Soft	0208 944 9000	Pinnacle	February 16th	Ubi Soft
Freedom	PC	Action	Ubi Soft	0208 944 9000	Pinnacle	February 16th	Ubi Soft
GTA London	PC	Action	Sold Out	0207 928 3993	Centresoft	February 16th	DMA
Heroes 2	PC	RPG	Sold Out	0207 928 3993	Centresoft	February 16th	3DO
Supercross 2001	PSX	Racing	EA	01932 450000	Pinnacle	February 16th	EA Sports
Toca	PC	Racing	Sold Out	0207 928 3993	Centresoft	February 16th	Codemasters
Vegas Games	PC	Strategy	Sold Out	0207 928 3993	Centresoft	February 16th	3DO
WDL: WarJetz	GBC	Action	3DO	0207 761 9300	Gauntlet	February 16th	3DO
Batman of the Future	N64	Action	Ubi Soft	0208 944 9000	Pinnacle	February 19th	Ubi Soft
Tokyo Extreme Racing 2	PS2	Racing	Ubi Soft	0208 944 9000	Pinnacle	February 19th	Genki
C&C: Red Alert Classic	PC	Action	EA	01932 450000	Pinnacle	February 23rd	Westwood
Dune 2000 Classic	PSX	Strategy	EA	01932 450000	Pinnacle	February 23rd	Westwood
Evergrace	PS2	RPG	Ubi Soft	0208 944 9000	Pinnacle	February 23rd	From Software
Heart of Winter	PC	Add-on	Interplay	0207 551 0000	Open	February 23rd	Interplay
Heroes of M&M 3	DC	RPG	Ubi Soft	0208 944 9000	Gauntlet	February 23rd	3DO
Knockout Kings 2000	PSX	Sport	EA	01932 450000	Pinnacle	February 23rd	EA Sports
Knockout Kings 2001	PS2	Sport	EA	01932 450000	Pinnacle	February 23rd	EA Sports
NBA Live 2001	PS2	Sport	EA	01932 450000	Pinnacle	February 23rd	EA Sports
Need for Speed IV Classic	PC	Racing	EA	01932 450000	Pinnacle	February 23rd	EA Sports
Oni	PS2	Action	Take 2	01753 854444	JoAG	February 23rd	GoD

FROM FEBRUARY 9TH

A-Z

Armoured Core 2	February 2nd
Army Men-Toys In Space	February 16th
Army Men: Vikki's Adventures	February 16th
Batman of the Future	February 19th
C&C: Red Alert Classic	February 23rd
Dark Colony	February 16th
Delta Force - Land Warrior	February 2nd
Dinosaur's Us	February 2nd
Dragon Tales	February 9th
Dune 2000 Classic	February 23rd
ECW Anarchy Rulz	February 9th
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Emperor's New Groove	February 16th
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Final Fantasy IX	February 16th
Flipper	February 16th
Freedom	February 16th
Gallarians	February 2nd
GTA London	February 16th
Gunbird 2	February 2nd
Half Life	February 2nd
Harvest Moon	February 2nd
Heart of Winter	February 23rd
Heist	February 2nd
Heroes 2	February 16th
Heroes of M&M 3	February 23rd
Kasparov	February 9th
Knockout Kings 2000 Classic	February 23rd
Knockout Kings 2001	February 23rd
Mech Warrior 4	February 2nd
Merlin	February 2nd
Monaco Budget	February 2nd
NBA Live 2001	February 23rd
Need for Speed IV Classic	February 23rd
Oni	February 23rd
Phantasy Star Online	February 9th
Pizza Connection 2	February 2nd
Rainbow 6	February 2nd
Supercross 2001	February 16th
The Settlers IV	February 2nd
Toca	February 16th
Theme Park Inc.	February 9th
Tokyo Extreme Racing 2	February 19th
Vegas Games	February 16th
WDL: WarJetz	February 16th



The excellent Knock Out Kings returns next month

Home Software

An at-a-glance guide to new education, reference, lifestyle and utility PC titles on their way to retail...

Disney www.disney.com	Havas sierra-online.co.uk
0208 222 0000	0118 920 9100
The Emperor's New Groove	Feb 16th
Emperor's Groove Activity	Feb 16th
Focus www.focusmm.co.uk	
01889 570156	
Pro CrossStitch Pattern	Feb 9th
Wild Wild West	Feb 9th
5,000 Photo Objects	Feb 9th
Create Your Own Cards	Feb 9th
Shadow Company	Feb 9th
Suzuki Alstare Challenge	Feb 9th
Football World Manager	Feb 9th
Tonic Trouble	Feb 9th
Animaniacs Gigantic	Feb
Animaniacs Splatt Ball	Feb
Mattel www.mattel.com	
01293 651300	
Scooby Doo Phantom of Knight	Feb
Scooby Doo Show Down	Feb
Reader Rabbit Plus ADAPT	Feb
Reader Rabbit Junior Plus ADAPT	Feb
Reader Rabbit Thinking	Feb
Reader Rabbit Year 1	Feb
Reader Rabbit Year 2	Feb
PokeRom 2: Articuno	March
PokeRom 2: Zapdos	March
PokeRom 2: Moltres	March
PokeRom 2: Hoothoot	March
PokeRom 2: Ledyba	March
Tivola www.tivola.com	
01908 617746	
Max & The Magician	March
Oscar Flies Into the Mountain	March
Jennifer is Missing	March
Ubi Soft www.ubisoft.com	
0208 944 9000	
Elmo's Number Journey (PSX)	Feb
Elmo's Letter Journey (PSX)	Feb
Rayman Junior Range (PSX)	Feb

Verdict



Final Fantasy IX

Due: February 16th
Format: PSOne
Genre: RPG
Publisher: Square Europe
Tel: 0208 962 1550

Games Master

"It all looks familiar, but who cares? It's great. You'll be happily playing it until your fingers fall off. And you won't regret it!"

95%

Official PlayStation

"Squaresoft has gone and done it again. It's a welcome return to form for Final Fantasy and phenomenal value for money. Get it."

9/10

CVG

"We have played it solidly from beginning to end and we just can't see how it could be any better. We want to keep playing and playing and never stop."

5/5

February 16th sees the launch of PSOne's first blockbuster game of the year, namely the eagerly awaited Final Fantasy IX from Square Europe.

This latest edition marks a return to a more traditional style of RPG, though the game retains its epic intertwining story lines and epic FMV sequences.

MCV has managed to capture a copy of the game, a T-shirt and set of Final Fantasy IX figures to hand out to five MCV readers.

Just answer the question below and mail it to mcvproduct@hotmail.com along with your full postal address.

What does RPG stand for?

- A. Role-Playing Game
- B. Random Plot Generator
- C. Rapid Plot Game

P PINNACLE SOFTWARE



The Choice of Market Leaders

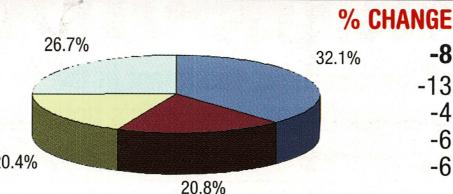
Tel: 01322 665652 Fax: 01322 619259 Email: sales@pinnacle-software.co.uk

ALL FORMATS TOP 40

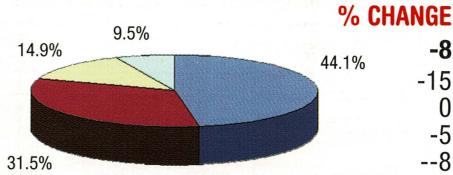
This Week	Last Week	Title	Label	Prima Guides	Format
1	2	WWTB MILLIONAIRE	EIDOS		PSX, PC, DC
2	3	WWF SMACKDOWN 2	THQ		PSX
3	2	FIFA 2001	EA SPORTS		PSX, PS2, PC
4	4	DRIVER 2	INFOGRAPHICS		PSX
5	15	CRASH TEAM RACING	SONY		PSX2
6	9	CHAMP. MGR. SEASON 00/01	EIDOS		PC
7	5	SSX SNOWBOARD	EA		PS2
8	6	TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2	ACTIVISION		PSX
9	36	SPYRO THE DRAGON 2	SONY		PSX
10	10	THEME PARK WORLD	EA		PC, PSX, PS2, MAC
11	7	THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH	MGM/EA		PSX
12	11	RAYMAN	UBI SOFT		PSX, GBC, PC
13	17	TOY STORY 2	DISNEY/ACTIVISION		GBC, PSX PC
14	8	MOH: UNDERGROUND	DREAMWORKS/EA		PSX
15	16	THE SIMS	EA/MAXIS		PC
16	14	TOMB RAIDER: CHRONICLES	EIDOS		PSX
17	11	TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT	NAMCO/SONY		PS2
18	21	THE SIMS: LIVIN' IT UP	EA/MAXIS		PC
19	19	DRIVER	INFOGRAPHICS		PSX, PC, GBC
20	23	TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX	RED STORM/UBI SOFT		PSX, GBC, N64
21	35	C&C: RED ALERT 2	WESTWOOD/EA		PC
22	13	TIMESPLITTERS	EIDOS		PS2
23	NEW	SPEC OPS: RANGER ELITE	TAKE 2		PSX
24	20	TOMB RAIDER 4	EIDOS		PSX, DC, PC, MAC
25	18	F1 CHAMPIONSHIP 2000	EA SPORTS		PSX, PS2, GBC, PC
26	28	102 DALMATIANS	DISNEY/ACTIVISION/EIDOS		GBC, PSX, PC, DC
27	34	GRAN TURISMO 2	SONY		PSX
28	RE	COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2.0	Codemasters		PC, PSX
29	25	TOY RACER	SEGA		DC
30	22	MUSIC	Codemasters		PSX
31	24	POKEMON PINBALL	NINTENDO		GBC
32	26	DEAD OR ALIVE 2	SONY/ACCLAIM		PS2, DC
33	30	ARMY MEN: LAND, SEA, AIR	3DO EUROPE		PSX
34	29	SPYRO: YEAR OF THE DRAGON	SONY		PSX
35	32	DIE HARD TRILOGY 2	FOX/EA		PSX, PC
36	39	POKEMON RED	NINTENDO		GB
37	RE	SUPER MARIO BROS	NINTENDO		GBC
38	RE	C&C: TIBERIAN SUN	WESTWOOD/EA		PC
39	40	RUGRATS SEARCH FOR REPTAR	THQ		PSX, GBC
40	RE	CIVILIZATION: CALL TO POWER	ACTIVISION/INFOGRAPHICS		PC, MAC, DVD

Market Breakdown (Week ending January 20th)

Market Share (Units)

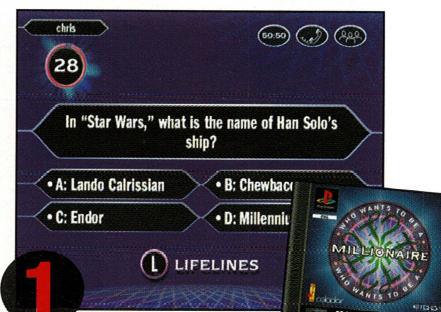


Market Share (Value)



GAME TITLES A-Z

Title	Chart Position
102 Dalmations	26
Army Men: Land, Sea, Air	33
C&C: Red Alert 2	21
C&C: Tiberian Sun	38
Champ. Mgr. Season 00/01	6
Civilization: Call To Power	40
Colin McRae Rally 2.0	28
Crash Team Racing	5
Dead Or Alive 2	32
Die Hard Trilogy 2	35
Driver	19
Driver 2	4
F1 Championship 2000	25
FIFA 2001	3
Gran Turismo 2	27
MOH: Underground	14
Music	30
Pokemon Pinball	31
Pokemon Red	36
Rayman	12
Rugrats Search For Reptar	39
Spec Ops: Ranger Elite	23
Spyro The Dragon 2	9
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Timesplitters	22
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six	20
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Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	8
Toy Racer	29
Toy Story 2	13
WWF Smackdown 2	2
WWTB Millionaire	1



Last week saw the market down eight per cent by both value and volume over the previous week. However, when compared to the same period last year, the UK interactive entertainment industry is actually up 22 per cent by units, although up by just seven per cent by value. Some 700,000 units of software were sold last week worth around £15m.



All information printed above is the strict copyright of ChartTrack and ELSPA. For more information, subscribe to the ChartTrack Weekly Report. Contact ELSPA at Station Road, Offenham, Near Evesham, Worcestershire WR11 5LW. Tel: 01386 830642.

ChartTrack collects sales data from more than 4,000 UK outlets. Supporting retailers include Argos, Asda, Blockbuster, Comet, Currys, Dixons, Electronics Boutique, Game Ltd., HMV, John Menzies, MVC, Our Price, PC World, Staples, Tempo, Virgin, WH Smith, Woolworths and a small selection of independents.

PLAYSTATION: FULL-PRICE

1. WWF Smackdown 2	THQ
2. WWTBAM	Eidos
3. Driver 2	Infogrames
4. FIFA 2001	EA
5. MOH: Underground	EA

PLAYSTATION 2

1. SSX: Snowboard	EA
2. Tekken Tag Tournament	Sony
3. Timesplitters	Eidos
4. FIFA 2001	EA
5. Dead Or Alive 2	Sony

PC CD-ROM: FULL-PRICE

1. WWTBAM	Eidos
2. Champ. Mgr. 00/01	Eidos
3. The Sims	Maxis/EA
4. The Sims: Livin' It Up	Maxis/EA
5. C&C: Red Alert 2	EA

GAME BOY COLOUR

1. Pokemon Pinball	Nintendo
2. Super Mario Bros	Nintendo
3. 102 Dalmations	Disney
4. Pokemon Trading	Nintendo
5. Thunderbirds	Sci

PLAYSTATION: BUDGET

1. Crash Team Racing	Sony
2. Spyro The Dragon 2	Sony
3. Toy Story 2	Activision
4. Rayman	Ubi Soft
5. T.Clancy's Rainbow Six	Ubi Soft

DREAMCAST

1. Toy Racer	Sega
2. Sonic Adventure	Sega
3. Tomb Raider 4	Eidos
4. Sega Rally 2	Sega
5. Shenmue	Sega

PC CD-ROM: BUDGET

1. Theme Park World	EA
2. C&C: Tiberian Sun	EA
3. Civilization: Power	Activision
4. Virus Scan V 5.0	McAfee
5. FA Prem. League Stars 2001	EA

NINTENDO 64

1. Pokemon Snap	Nintendo
2. Quake II	Activision
3. Vigilante 8	Activision
4. Zelda: Majora's Mask	Nintendo
5. F1 World Grand Prix 2	Nintendo

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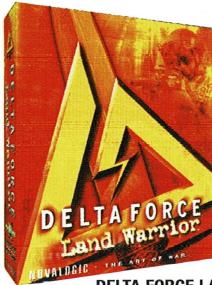
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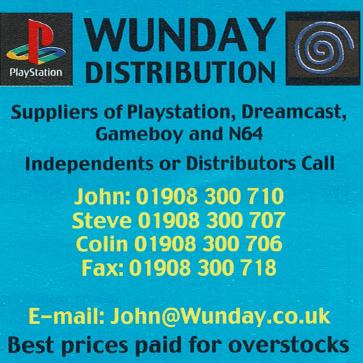


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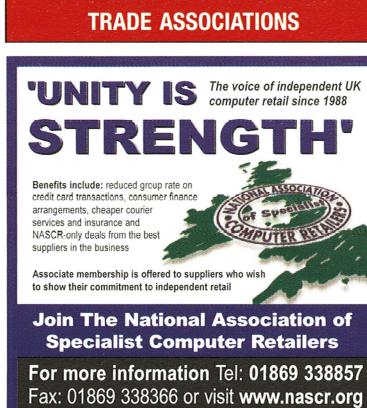
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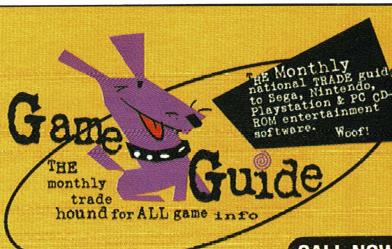
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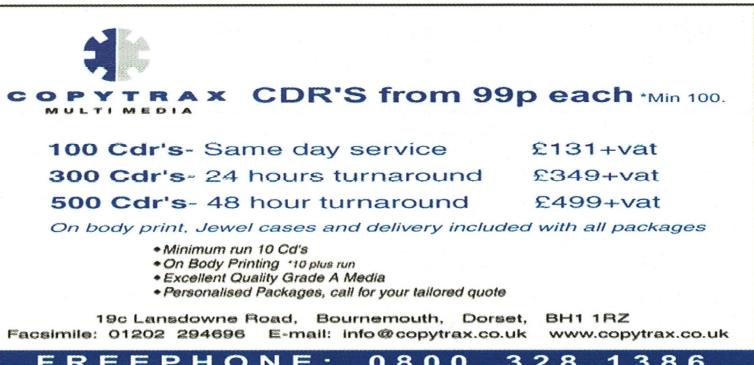
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Readers' Lives

David Smith

MD, Interactive Selection



We know what they do from nine to five, but what do the movers and shakers of our industry get up to after hours? MCV finds out...

What was your first job?

Credit Control temp at Gem Distribution.

What has been the best lesson you've learnt in your career?

Don't assume anyone else has a better idea about what they are doing than you.

When you were at school, what did you want to be when you grew up?

A Chartered Accountant.

How do you like to relax?

A Guinness Bitter and a strategy game.

What's listed on your CV under 'Hobbies and Interests'?

Golf, skiing and family history.

What are they really?

MUFC, strategy games and looking after a pregnant wife.

Greatest achievement to date?

Continually breaking the mould of recruitment in this industry, helping more and more people make career-turning job changes.

Most embarrassing moment?

Front cover pin-up status in a recruitment industry mag.

What are your worst habits?

Not listening when I think I already have the answer.

Do you have a culinary speciality?

Roast duck and cashew nuts.

Who would you like to be for the day?

An HR Manager with a stack of jobs to fill, so that I can make that call.

Forward Planner

MILIA 2001 16-PAGE PREVIEW

Friday February 2nd Issue 121

MCV prepares for Milia 2001 and the Think.Tank conference with a special issue featuring what will be a minimum 16-page preview of the event. Contact Ronnie.Dungant@mcvuk.com for more information on editorial content.



MCV QUESTION TIME

Friday February 9th Issue 122

The forum that gives MCV readers the opportunity to grill a senior industry figure returns and turns the spotlight on Microsoft's VP for the home and retail division across the EMEA territories Sandy Duncan. If you have a question for the man who will be responsible for Xbox's launch in Europe email Stuart.Dinsey@mcvuk.com.

READER POLL PROFILE

Each week MCV surveys the thoughts of its readers on current issues in the interactive entertainment market...

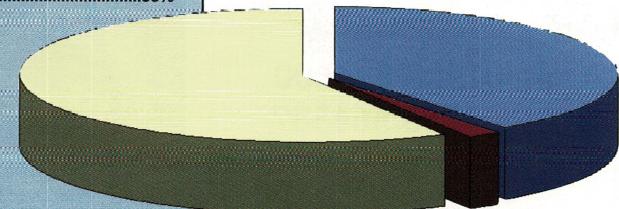
Jury Service

Do you think the UK games market needs new blood or should we be investing more in the current staff pool?

Results

New Blood	38%
Invest in Current Staff	2%
Both	56%

Source: MCV



If you would like to sign up for Jury Service, email lisa.foster@mcvuk.com

Daniel Griffiths, *Daily Radar*

"New blood, please. New blood means new ideas. Bankable next-gen sequels like Tekken 4 and Final Fantasy 14 sure sound tasty, but how about some genuinely new future franchises, too?"

Jeremy Furniss, *Livingstone Guarantee*

"An intravenous drip of good management, with extensive experience gained outside the industry would benefit a huge number of games companies."

Doug Bone, *HMV*

"Get rid of the old bastards (over 30s) and give energetic youngsters like me a pay rise. Then, when I turn 30 in May, reverse the process, invest more in seasoned veterans (over 30s) and sack all the kids."

Howard Jacobson, *Wild Things*

"We've just invested more in our current staff pool - a new diving board and a swim-up bar. The staff love it."

Clive Wilkinson, *CD Team*

"Andy industry needs a balance of the two."

Owain Bennallack, *Develop Magazine*

"Sony's Akio Morito says the future of a company lies in its youngest staff. That's equally true of an industry."

Colin Jackson, *Gameplay*

"Invest in the current staff pool. Send me a cheque."

David Smith, *Interactive Selection*

"We cannot survive without fresh talent. The industry's underlying growth means there are big opportunities both for the career progression of existing staff and the gaming industry wannabes out there."

Mungo Amyatt-Leir, *Just Flight*

"The UK is starting to become the Dad's Army of the industry - good friends, lots of japes and talk of how well we did in the last war. But how effective are we now?"

Ruth Chaloner, *Barrington Harvey PR*

"With increasing rationalisation in the UK and the inevitable redundancies, surely it's better to look after those who've already signed their lives away to the industry?"

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According to an official ABC audit for the issue dated Friday May 25th 2000, the total net circulation for MCV was 9,594.

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Milia 2001 is the perfect opportunity to promote your business, thanks to the diversity of those that attend. And, of course, MCV Media will be there in full force, helping you to maximise the potential of this important event.



MCV and Develop: Now available in Cannes

MCV

Friday February 2nd

MILIA PREVIEW

Minimum 16-page official Milia preview featuring all the major exhibitors from the interactive entertainment industry, a rundown of the Think.Tank Conference, highlights from the Developer Village, special events, contact details and, of course, much, much more.

Distribution 11,000+



Friday February 9th

This exhibition special will feature a vastly increased pagination with editorial content specifically commissioned in order to increase MCV's appeal to Milia visitors. The issue will be distributed from MCV Media's large booth (R33.07) within Les Palais Des Festivals in Cannes and via exclusive distribution points. A copy of the magazine will also be hand-delivered to every single one of the several hundred exhibiting companies.

Distribution 16,000

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DISTRIBUTION

Total includes 5,000 extra copies at Milia plus exclusive distribution at the MCV and Develop sponsored Motorola Mobile Games Developer Seminar, taking place at Shaw Park Plaza Hotel in London February 5th-6th. Go to www.motorola.com/developers for more information

Develop

Published Thursday February 8th

FEBRUARY ISSUE

The monthly trade magazine that is already the talk of the development community will have a major presence at Milia, via the MCV Media stand and distribution throughout the show. If you want to reach the software developers who converge on Cannes every year in order to visit Milia's impressive Developer Village, find a new job or sell their content, then the February edition of Develop is an absolute must.

Distribution 10,000 (includes 5,000 at Milia.)

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Founded in July 1998, MCV Media is publisher of the dominant trade weekly MCV and new designers' monthly Develop. It is also sponsor of the E3 and ECTS trade shows and offers daily industry news at www.mcvuk.com. Contact Stuart.Dinsey@mcvuk.com for more info.

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